

# 2004 Youth Employment & Training Report



Prepared by the  
Minnesota Dept. of Employment & Economic Development  
Workforce Partnerships Division/Office of Community-Based Services  
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## For Additional Information on Youth Programs, Please Contact:

Kay Tracy, Director  
 Workforce Partnerships Division  
 Office of Community-Based Services  
 MN Dept. of Employment & Economic Development  
 First National Bank Building, Suite E200  
 332 Minnesota Street  
 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101  
 (651) 296-6064  
 E-Mail: Kay.Tracy@state.mn.us

Peggie Hicks, Program Coordinator  
 Workforce Partnerships Division  
 Office of Community-Based Services  
 MN Dept. of Employment & Economic Development  
 First National Bank Building, Suite E200  
 332 Minnesota Street  
 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101  
 (651) 297-2437  
 E-Mail: Peggie.Hicks@state.mn.us

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*Photo courtesy of Hennepin County.*

## 2004 Youth Employment & Training Report

### Introduction

Funds flow through the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the state-funded Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). 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. 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. 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 2003<br>Goal | PY 2003<br>Outcome |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| Younger Youth Skill Attainment              | 78.0%           | 91.9%              |
| Younger Youth Diploma/Equivalent Attainment | 53.0%           | 78.1%              |
| Younger Youth Placement & Retention         | 58.0%           | 77.1%              |
| Older Youth Placement                       | 65.0%           | 72.3%              |
| Older Youth Retention                       | 73.0%           | 84.2%              |
| Older Youth Wage Gain                       | \$ 3,000        | \$ 4,151           |
| Older Youth Credential                      | 46.0%           | 48.5%              |

## Youth Employment & Training Programs

### 2004 Statewide Outcome Information

(July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004)

|   | WIA Youth<br>Formula Grant | Percent | Minnesota Youth<br>Program* | Percent |
|---|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|
| Total Participants                                    | 4,258                      |         | 3,829                       |         |
| Male  | 2,231                      | 52%     | 2,126                       | 56%     |
| Female  | 2,027                      | 48%     | 1,703                       | 44%     |
| Age Groups  |                            |         |                             |         |
| 14- to 15-Year-Olds                                   | 1,348                      | 32%     | 1,584                       | 41%     |
| 16- to 18-Year-Olds                                   | 1,996                      | 47%     | 1,862                       | 49%     |
| 19- to 21-Year-Olds                                   | 913                        | 21%     | 381                         | 10%     |
| Race/Ethnicity Groups**                               |                            |         |                             |         |
| White   | 2,984                      | 61%     | 2,643                       | 69%     |
| African-American                                      | 861                        | 20%     | 716                         | 19%     |
| Hispanic  | 193                        | 5%      | 155                         | 4%      |
| Asian   | 181                        | 4%      | 353                         | 9%      |
| Native American or<br>Alaskan Native                  | 340                        | 8%      | 229                         | 6%      |
| Hawaiian Native or<br>Pacific Islander                | 14                         | < 1%    | 15                          | < 1%    |
| At-Risk Groups**                                      |                            |         |                             |         |
| Foster Child  | 288                        | 7%      | 311                         | 8%      |
| Pregnant or<br>Parenting Youth                        | 513                        | 12%     | 126                         | 3%      |
| Youth With a<br>Disability                            | 2,121                      | 50%     | 1,998                       | 52%     |
| Juvenile Offender                                     | 540                        | 13%     | 516                         | 13%     |
| Youth From Families<br>Receiving Public<br>Assistance | 996                        | 23%     | 908                         | 24%     |
| No. of Youth<br>Receiving a HS<br>Diploma or GED      | 834                        | 19%     | 162                         | 4%      |
| Cost Per Participant:                                 | \$1,788                    |         | \$1,024                     |         |

\* 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.

## Outcomes At-A-Glance

|  |
|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |
| Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau Counties  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |
| Rodger Coauette, Director<br>NW Private Industry Council,<br>Inc.<br>1730 University Avenue<br>Crookston, MN 56716 |
| (218) 281-6020   |

## Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 258 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 116 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 139 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 76  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 39  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 24  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 51  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 14  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 31  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 1   |

# Northwest Private Industry Council/ Inter-County Community Council

## Program Summary

The Northwest Private Industry Council contracts with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development to provide work experience, job placement, and occupational skill training through on-the-job training and classroom training to out-of-school youth. The Northwest Private Industry Council also contracts with Inter-County Community Council to provide work experience, basic skills training/classroom training, adult mentoring and leadership development to in-school youth.

The local Youth Council works with staff from the Northwest Private Industry Council, Inter-County Community Council and the Department of Employment and Economic Development in planning for the delivery of the WIA specific program elements that will be provided for targeted eligible youth within the seven counties of Northwest Minnesota. The commitment of all partners is to provide quality services to youth on an equitable basis throughout the Northwest Workforce Service Area.

## Work Experience

The youth programs maintain a strong work based philosophy that is diverse in its nature and unique to each community. Three summer work crews provided the program with visibility in the participating communities. The crews renovated a hospital operating room, painted buildings, and sorted, cleaned and boxed items for a fundraising auction held by a County Historical Society.

Individual worksites are located throughout the seven county area. Worksites are carefully chosen because they are committed to serving youth within the local community. The worksite supervisor serves as a role model and mentor for participating youth. Youth are evaluated for work maturity skills on a continuous basis by the worksite supervisors. The following comments from supervisors are typical of the type of feedback provided by the worksites: "He has done a fine job for us and has set a good example for the others he works with," and "She has turned out to be a valuable, reliable and trusted employee. She has matured and grown this summer."

## Program Impact

The community wants youth to be engaged in meaningful work that has a lasting result. As a result, youth programs have a huge impact not only on the youth but on their families and the cities in which they work.

Youth use the program as a learning experience to prove to parents and to school officials that they have changed and can be productive individuals. The employment of local youth is a visible statement that youth are valued by their communities and that there is pride in showcasing the good work they have accomplished.

## MYP and WIA

Inter-County Community Council operates the WIA Younger Youth and MYP as a seamless program. The mission is to provide all youth with the opportunity to develop work skills, earn a paycheck and to complete a community improvement project. By combining state and federal funds, opportunities for youth are maximized.

## 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 career goals. Youth also benefit greatly from on-the-job training leading to employment and work experience which provides them with a taste of the world of work.

## Work-Based Learning

A bike repair and bait shop were developed about five years ago as a collaborative effort for youth living in a group home for behaviorally challenged youth. Youth at this worksite earn community service hours, academic credit from the local school district and they earn a salary. Youth participating in this work have planned and developed a BMX and skateboard park. They continue to look for new ways to gain valuable work skills and to develop projects that fulfill a community need.



## Leadership Development

Fifteen youth participated in a two-day workshop entitled “Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens”. The group was lead by a high energy instructor who guided them through topics geared for high school youths. In summarizing the session, youth felt it helped them:

- Prioritize activities
- Improve their self-esteem
- Learn not to procrastinate and to get organized
- Learn about choices
- Learn to work as a “team”
- Set goals and dreams, then follow them

Three youth currently on probation worked with the Minnesota Conservation Corps in a summer outdoor residential camp at St. Croix State Park near Hinckley. This allowed the youth to spend eight weeks away from their home and friends and gain some rugged work experience. The Minnesota Conservation Corps provided crew leaders who served as role models to the youth. The youth worked 35 hours per week and received 5 hours of environmental awareness each week. One supervisor commented: “Youth are working very hard this summer and have been an asset to my crew and a positive reflection on the employment programs in Northwest Minnesota.”

## Youth Success Story

Heather Schuck is a 16 year old from rural Hallock, Minnesota. She is a student in the Kittson Central School District and has been enrolled in WIA for the past two years. Heather began her work experience career with a position at the Kittson Central High School in custodial work after the school day ended. She was very thankful that she was allowed to work around her volleyball schedule. Heather was always punctual and learned to work with others, but she said, “I certainly don’t want to be a custodian for the rest of my life”. This was a good lesson for her to learn early in life.

This summer Heather had two positions. She was an essential part of a crew that worked at the Kittson County Historical Society. The crew worked on “spring cleaning” every building on the museum grounds and they worked on an auction at the Historical Society at the end of the summer. Heather said, “I can’t believe someone else’s junk is really wanted by so many!” Heather was cheerful and tried to include others as she worked. Heather went out of her way to make shy youth feel good about themselves and their experiences.

Heather’s second position was in activities at the Kittson Memorial Nursing Home. She learned that it takes a special talent to visit with and keep residents engaged. Heather has a learning disability and has difficulty communicating with others. She tried to improve her communication skills this summer. She practiced by asking questions and by having others ask her questions which she had to communicate the answers to. She has also learned that she probably doesn’t want to work with the elderly as a long-term career choice.

This school year Heather will be working with the pre-school programs. She is anxious to find out just where her interests really lie. She is working at getting along with others and learning how to complete assignments.

**Outcomes At-A-Glance**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>  |  |
| Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pope Stevens, Todd, Traverse, Wadena and Wilkin Counties |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>  |  |
| Larry Buboltz, Director<br>Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.<br>803 Roosevelt Ave.,<br>PO Box 1108<br>Detroit Lakes, MN 56502   |  |
| (218) 846-7400  |  |

**Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program, Inc.**

**Work Sites Developed for Career Exploration and Work Experience**

RMCEP’s primary activities are career exploration and work experience. Worksites were chosen for quality supervision and opportunities to match career choices for youth. Younger youth typically decide where to work based on ease of commute to the work site. Work experience is focused on building “soft skills” of attendance, getting along with co-workers, and following supervisor’s directions. Older youth are interested in worksites that match their future career interests. Public and private sector worksites are developed to meet career interests such as:

- A youth enrolled in medical records training was able to gain experience at a private company which transcribes medical records. Other youth interested in the medical field were placed at nursing homes and the County Public Health office while attending LPN training.
- Youth interested in teaching were placed in day care centers to gain insight to child development.
- Lumber yards were a good match for two youth who do not have plans for post secondary education. These work sites provided training for unsubsidized employment.
- A Long Prairie body shop gave a youth career exposure in the auto body field.
- A youth experienced two different workplaces within his area of interest. He worked at a bus garage and with a private employer that repairs small engines.
- The Cass Lake Area Learning Center (ALC) provided an opportunity for a youth to be involved in geology, archeology, aquatic biology, math, product design and materials science as a teacher’s aide in a science and math program.

**Participant Information**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 722 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 489 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 354 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 232 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 113 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 116 |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 158 |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 92  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 79  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 15  |

In July, 116 sites were reviewed for quality and compliance. Significant findings: youth had meaningful work and are learning skills; 63 percent of the youth reported that the job experience related to their career goals; 113 supervisors said a mentoring relationship was developing.

**Work-Based Learning**

During orientation, supervisors were asked to incorporate basic skills learning into worksite duties. Youth read newspapers to residents in nursing homes and some of the residents helped the youth with difficult words or definitions. Youth improved their reading skills through reading books to children at daycare. Sites had youth research information for presentations or prepare newsletters for their organization. Other sites required youth to tally visitors and cash receipts utilizing their math skills.

Youth were asked to make predictions on what the average customer or cash flow would be based on their tallies for the week. At other sites, youth estimated paint and supplies needed to paint a room, and budgeted their work hours to complete projects on deadline.

**Partnering Activities**

Central Lakes College provided youth with a two-day college career experience. Youth participated in computer and graphic art design, machinist and heavy equipment programs, and business tours. The experience included financial aid information so low income youth would know they can afford college.

Youth enrolled at ALC’s earned academic credit for their work experience. CEP coordinates services with local schools and area learning centers to assist special needs students with their Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals. Brainerd and Pequot Lakes School Districts, Cass Lake ALC, and Grant County provide funding

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for supervisors to operate youth service corps. The YouthBuild Program includes life skills, community service, and team building as well as building construction. Youth placed with The White Earth Peacemaking Circle participate in curriculum to build positive decision making skills and address chemical dependency issues.

### Mentoring and Leadership Opportunities

On-site mentoring is a great asset of the youth program. Supervisors reported developing strong mentoring relationships with youth who worked year around. Many supervisors expressed concern for the youth's health or home life in addition to concerns about how they were doing on the job. A worksite in Brainerd is reviewing with the youth the classes he is going to take in college and how they fit the career field. At another site, the supervisor advised an 18 year old youth on how to apply for health insurance. A supervisor in Frazee provided a work environment with encouragement to be responsible and reliable and lots of positive reinforcement, where youth could discuss what was happening in their daily lives, talk about life skills, future schooling, careers and employment.

At the State Veterans Cemetery worksite, the supervisor was so impressed with a youth placed there that he applied for state funding to hire Jeremy at \$10.25 versus the youth program minimum wage. The supervisor is encouraging Jeremy to go on to post secondary education this fall and will hire him back next summer. A supervisor assisted a youth to enroll in Certified Nursing Assistant classes which could lead to unsubsidized employment. This happened because the supervisor recognized a talent in this worker that no one else did.

Host sites incorporate leadership development in their work situation. Lead workers are asked to be role models of employer expected behaviors. They help communicate information from supervisors to workers, help set up schedules, and monitor progress. One youth took on extra responsibilities at her work site and her supervisor stated, "I would have a hard time running this place without her." Some of our best mentors on the work site are the youth themselves who are lead workers. A youth who participated in the Grant County Service Team in past years achieved her goal when she served as mentor to the other team members. The Cass Lake ALC utilized two youth as peer mentors. The Cass Lake ALC also offers academic credit for leadership activity.

### Impact of the Program

The youth program allowed youth to experience their first real job, gain skills and experience to prepare them for private employers. Youth receive academic credit for their work experience. Some youth were able to make restitution. The youth program also allows youth opportunity to give back to their community by working in agencies that provide a benefit to community members. Youth are asked about how the program impacts them. Some of their responses included: "More respect for others and myself." "It has taught me so much about commitment." "It has helped me feel important like I'm worth having around."

The work youth do also impacts the businesses they help. One young woman proudly shared what she learned in her work experience: "I have some good ideas to help the business. I have come up with a shipping plan that will prevent them from making shipping errors."



**Outcomes At-A-Glance**

|  |
|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |
| Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis Counties--excluding the City of Duluth                                  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |
| Dennis Wain, Director<br>Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training<br>820 N. 9th St., Suite 240,<br>PO Box 1028<br>Virginia, MN 55792 |
| (218) 748-2200   |

**Participant Information**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 536 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 160 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 274 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 84  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 59  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 21  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 117 |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 24  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 65  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 12  |

**Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training**

**Program Summary**

The Summer 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 some direction for a young person’s future. The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training provides a number of activities, workshops and enrichment exercises to compliment the summer work experience and assist youth on their career path. Activities include tours of local technical and community colleges, money management workshops, first aid certification, career assessment, job shadowing, creating resumes, filling out applications and interviewing, financial opportunities for college, field trips, hands-on work experience and special work-related training.

**Work Experience**

Youth workers at the Cloquet Forestry Center help with research by collecting and counting seeds for a five-year study of Black Ash and their seed viability as well as planting hybrid seedlings in the nursery. From conservation and preventing plant disease in fire jumping, workers learn more every day and remain enthusiastic about their involvement. Youth participants at this site often choose to seek careers in the forest industry.

**Program Impact**

Jackie Tague, 19 is the mother of a six-month old girl. She couldn’t find a job due to her background, but needed to work. Now that Tague is employed at the Hibbing Area Chamber of Commerce through the summer youth program, everything is coming together. “This is the most flexible job I’ve ever had and that means a lot being a single mom,” she said.

The objective is to provide positive work experience for her resume so she can obtain future employment. “One of my main goals working here this summer was to leave with a good reference,” she said. Both supervisors at the site are thrilled to be references for their youth workers.

**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 a number of youth. Youth who do not qualify for WIA typically qualify for MYP and are still eligible for receiving services.

**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. Justin Paulson, 21, has been involved with the Summer Youth Program for several years. He graduated from high school in 2001, but was unsure of his future. Career counselor Missy Mortenson assisted



Paulson with the application process and the Office of Job Training was able to help locate funding for his education. Last spring, Paulson graduated from Mesabi Range Community and Technical College with a degree in graphic design this spring and is looking forward to a full-time position.

## Success Story

Heidi Frazier, 19, of Zim discovered her future working for the University of Minnesota Extension Service in Virginia through the Summer Youth Program. "I have been able to experience a very positive 'first job' that has helped me in other work situations," she said. Working as an office assistant led Frazier to study communication at Concordia College in Moorhead. "Being here has shown me the importance of interpersonal communication and has sparked an interest in me to learn more," she explained.

The college junior is now a member of the Youth Council and she shared what her involvement in the program means to her future. "I have found the work program to be an excellent opportunity for me. Unlike many other college students, I am fortunate to be able to work in a job that focuses on advancing skills and providing a safe and positive environment. Thanks to this program, many area youth not only have jobs, but jobs that are flexible for their needs and work specifically with the skills they have or want to develop. On a personal level, this program has helped me develop career skills. More importantly, I have developed relationships with some wonderful and caring people."

## Career Exploration

Summer workshops found a new way to introduce young people to the workforce. Along with usual activities, such as college tours, money management and personal safety equipment, some career counselors also chose to tour local businesses.

- A St. Louis County group of participants toured Target. This is a major employer for local youth. Participants learned about the application process and what managers look for in new employees.
- An Aitkin County group toured small town businesses and learned about the responsibilities and rewards of entrepreneurship.

These workshops presented different career possibilities firsthand. Participants had a chance to speak with owners, managers and employees at all the businesses to learn more.

## Adult Mentoring

Brittany Lambert is a child care aide at Apple Tree Learning Center with supervisor Lori Johnson. Johnson excels at building the self-esteem and confidence of her young employees. Lambert had done so well at the center that Johnson requested she become an employee of Apple Tree when she turns sixteen in January. Lambert hopes to continue with the year-round program until then.

As an employee of the center, Lambert will be a teacher's assistant. The high school sophomore plans to continue working at Apple Tree while she finishes her education and hopes to someday be director of a day care facility just as Johnson is now. Johnson has clearly become a role model for Lambert and has made a positive impact on her young employee.

## Rewards/Recognition

Each year, awards of recognition are presented to the outstanding youth participants, supervisors, worksites and work teams. 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. Recognition may be all the incentive they need to continue on the path to career success.



## Outcomes At-A-Glance

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>  |  |
| City of Duluth  |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>  |  |
| Don Hoag, Manager<br>Workforce Development<br>332 City Hall, 411 West 1st St.<br>Duluth, MN 55802 |  |
| (218) 730-5770  |  |

## Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 180 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 170 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 47  |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 47  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 40  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 40  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 54  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 52  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 27  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 26  |

## Youth Employment Services (Y.E.S.) Duluth

### Program Summary

Services are provided to in-school and out-of-school youth through the Duluth Workforce Center, including opportunities for work experience, help with doing a job search, and career guidance. Tutoring is available in the on-site classroom for study skills, basic skills help, and GED preparation. Financial aid assistance and guidance are available to those planning to continue their education beyond high school. Each participant receives case management and individual plan development services.

### Work Experience

Sixty-two 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 participant created a marketing video for the Y.E.S. Duluth Program. Continuing to be a valuable worksite during the summer and year round for both in-school and out-of-school youth has been the Women In Construction Training Program. Once the work experience hours are completed, Women In Construction has hired participants directly. One participant, during her work experience, was a mentor for a week long camp for girls in their early teens.

### Program Impact

Most youth who were working on their GED this past year were successful. Those who have not received their GED yet continue to work towards their 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. Completion of work experiences have led to individuals getting hired directly by the employer.

### MYP and WIA Programs

All participants are dual enrolled in MYP and WIA. In addition to helping fund work experience opportunities, combining the state and federal resources allows for maximum flexibility in providing services to participants.

### Out-of-School Services

Youth can prepare for their GED in the classroom located right at the WorkForce Center and receive one-on-one attention from a licensed teacher. Because of this, case managers can easily communicate with the teacher on students' progress and have more opportunity to interact with the youth. Youth who have graduated from high school can get guidance and assistance in finding financial aid 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 that have reading difficulties related to improper binocular functioning. Support Services are also provided.

### Partnerships with Other Youth Serving Agencies

The WSA partners 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 and the classroom teacher are on site at the Youth Center one day a week to help with job skills and GED pre-testing. The Program of Promise, a program at Lifehouse, partnered with us to enable their participants who were involved in work experiences to continue those work experiences during the summer.

### Rewards/Recognition

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

### Alternative Schooling/Tutoring/Study Skills Training

Y.E.S. Duluth has a classroom on-site at the WorkForce Center where participants can work on their GEDs, diplomas, or prepare for college. One-on-one tutoring is provided by a licensed teacher. Youth who have reading difficulties can benefit greatly by completing the Vision Training System which improves their reading ability.

### Success Story

Erik came to YES Duluth at age 19, was looking for work and needed his GED. One of his major concerns was not being able to pay his child support for his child. Through the YES Duluth classroom, he earned his GED and was able to enter an office skills training program. Erik then participated in a work experience at the WorkForce Center, where he worked at the reception desk and became proficient in using the telephone system, customer service, and referring clients to the appropriate agencies and staff. Erik also used his spreadsheet skills to assist in preparing the payroll for the work experience program. A YES Duluth staff person then helped Erik find a job at a local travel agency where he can use his clerical and reception skills. Today, Erik is working full-time and fulfilling his responsibility to make his child support payments. In addition, he is more involved in his child's life by being a good supportive parent.

Erik says, "Working with the YES Duluth Program helped me become a responsible citizen and a better parent." His work experience at the WorkForce Center gave him the confidence to apply for other jobs because he had developed a positive work history and good references.



## Outcomes At-A-Glance

|  |
|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |
| An 11-county area in Central Minnesota including Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeke, Mille Lacs, Pine, Renville, Sherburne and Wright Counties |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |
| Barbara Chaffee, Director<br>Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services<br>106 Pine Street<br>Monticello, MN 55362   |
| (763) 271-3715   |

## Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 437 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 240 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 292 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 163 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 50  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 61  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 64  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 20  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 37  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 7   |

# Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services

## Program Summary

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS) serves economically disadvantaged and at-risk youth by providing employment and training services that help youth achieve their potential to become productive and self-sufficient. The Youth Department of CMJTS provides comprehensive case management services to at-risk youth ages 14 – 21 in eleven rural counties within Central Minnesota. Youth Employment Specialists work with participants one-on-one in their schools, worksites, homes and other locations convenient for the participant, developing 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. The Employment Specialist matches participants with work that will help them build work skills and self-esteem. The worksites are beneficial to rural youth who may not otherwise have the opportunity to develop such skills or explore their career interests. In addition, staff visits participants at their worksites to evaluate their progress. With the support of the Employment Specialist, participants learn to perfect necessary skills such as punctuality, problem solving, communication and other skills necessary for success in the workplace.

## Impact of the Program

Services provided by CMJTS ensure at-risk youth make a successful transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency. Such outcomes 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 by providing a competent workforce. One way that CMJTS measures outcomes and success is by conducting Youth Focus Groups throughout the 11 county WSA on a regular basis.

## 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 services. WIA provides the same services as well as increased supportive services. The Youth Employment Specialist 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. The Youth Employment Specialist works with each person to create strategies that work best for them. Many participants enroll in an Alternative Learning Center with the assistance of the Youth Employment Specialist. Other participants entering a GED program are eligible for an incentive plan to receive \$15 per class, up to a maximum of \$250.

The incentive plan helps encourage participants to complete their GED in a more timely manner. In addition, the Employment Specialist assists the participants in determining their career interests through a variety of assessments. Those interested in attending post-secondary education will research such opportunities with the Youth Employment Specialist, often visiting colleges. Those wishing to be employed immediately may take on work experience to build their employability levels, or work with their Youth Employment Specialist to find work in the private sector.

## Follow-up Services

Upon completion of the program, participants remain in contact with the staff for another 12 months. During that time, follow-up participants are assessed to ensure

they are able to sustain self-sufficiency. These participants are eligible for receiving supportive services and--if necessary--they can re-enroll in the program. Each month the participant is contacted and provided 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 assistance towards self-sufficiency.

### Leadership Development

CMJTS looks 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 to them personally. Two participants served on the Youth Advisory Council, providing insight to the needs of rural youth. CMJTS conducted 23 youth focus groups for our youth participants from June, 2003 to April, 2004. Over 100 youth answered questions about motivation, training and computer literacy, support systems, youth culture and attitudes, extra-curricular activities and discussions on ways to improve services in the youth programs.

### Academic Credit

Nine grants were funded during the summer of 2004 to Big Lake, Chisago Lakes High School, Cornerstones, Crossroads Learning Center, East Central Middle School, Glencoe-Silver Lake, Hutchinson, Pine City Alternative Learning Center, and Village Ranch. The Academic Enrichment and Community Service grants provided assistance to the at-risk participants that were basic-skills deficient and are in need of work skills training and career exploration. All of the participants received academic credit or hours towards their graduation.

### Success Story--Lindsay Schauf

Hello! I would like to introduce to you, Lindsey Schauf. Lindsey is 17-years-old and resides in Maple Lake. Lindsey was initially enrolled in the WIA program in 2002. When Lindsey began in the youth program, she had very little work experience and needed some extra support, due to her disability. Lindsey was placed at the Greater West Metro Humane Society in Buffalo where she was able to expand her job skills. Her duties included walking and bathing dogs, taking care of the cats and cleaning kennels. Lindsey says, "The people and the animals are what makes the Humane Society a fun place to work." She is particularly fond of a puppy named Prince who has just been adopted. Although she was sad that he left, she was happy that he had a good home to go to. "Getting attached to the animals and then seeing them leave is probably one of the hardest parts of the job," says Lindsey.

Patience and responsibility are two words that come to mind when Lindsey describes what skills she has learned from this job. She is thankful that she works in an environment that has positive influences and promotes growth. Lindsey's supervisor has relayed many words of praise on her performance and claims that she is a phenomenal worker. Lindsey's hard work has earned her a position as an employee through the Greater West Metro Humane Society. The next step Lindsey says she would like to accomplish "is to take on more challenges at the Humane Society."

This fall, Lindsey will be a senior and plans to go onto college after she graduates. She is undecided as to what career she will pursue, but she feels that the experience she has gained at the Humane Society has opened her eyes to new possibilities.



**Outcomes At-A-Glance**

|  |
|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |
| 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 |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |
| Juanita Lauritsen, Director<br>SW Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc.<br>607 West Main<br>Marshall, MN 56258<br><br>(507) 537-6987  |

**Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc.**

**Program Summary**

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

- Work Experience in both the public and private sector
- Career Exploration activities
- Job Seeking and Retention assistance
- Post-secondary tuition and support services assistance

**Transition Services**

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, county human service centers and group homes, community corrections, and Rehabilitation Services and other partners of the WorkForce Center System. The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council also leverages WIA and MYP funding with grants from the Youth Intervention Program, Juvenile Justice, and the Youth Offender Initiative through PACT 4.

**Participant Information**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 167 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 57  |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 120 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 41  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 8   |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 5   |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 21  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 3   |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 9   |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 1   |

**Work Experience Program Impact**

Through the youth program’s work experience component, youth have the opportunity to:

- Experience employment in an environment with clear expectations
- Explore jobs in a career field of interest to them
- Understand and develop good work habits
- Understand the value of a paycheck

Youth are placed in a variety of work sites - any business or entity is considered to be a potential worksite, as long as it complies with child labor laws and provides a safe learning environment for the youth. Participants and supervisors receive a thorough orientation at the beginning of the program, outlining expected behaviors and responsibilities. For many youth, this is their first experience as a paid employee, and great care is taken to make sure they learn good work ethic while in the program, along with concrete skills to take with them to their next job. Comments from participants include:

- “(The program) allows today’s youth to gain work experience and to see if they would be interested in certain jobs as future careers.”
- “I have a better attitude (toward work) - before I used to think I would never work, and if I did then I wouldn’t like it, but I guess I was wrong.”
- “I’ve learned that it really pays to work hard at whatever you do, and to try to get along with everyone no matter what.”

**MYP and WIA Programs**

MYP and WIA funding sources complement each other in the WSA by allowing a larger number of youth to be served. The greater flexibility of eligibility and services allowed with MYP dollars is of great benefit to the youth of southwest Minnesota. SW MN PIC is always looking for ways to leverage resources by accessing grants from other organizations and businesses.

**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. Program funds were used to offer area ALC juniors and seniors a one day “LifeSkills Transition” workshop. Students had the opportunity to hear from a young entrepreneur, and attend break out sessions on issues covering personal financial

management, accessing post-secondary training, and acceptable work behaviors. ALC students also have the opportunity to attend one-day hands-on career exploration sessions at local technical college campuses, experiencing programs such as machine tool, cosmetology, computer support technology, carpentry, and auto mechanics, among others.

### Academic Credit/Work-Based Learning

During the school year, the majority of the youth program participants are involved in their school's Work Experience or OJT 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 work site supervisor, and the PIC staff person assures that the student will have the necessary support to achieve success in the work place. Issues at the work place 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 work place and in the classroom, where they concentrate on job seeking and retention skills, as well as career exploration activities.

### Adult Mentoring

Often the role of work site supervisor takes on that of a mentor. Worksite supervisors understand the goals of our program and work to help the youth succeed. The supervisor goes "above and beyond" what is expected, offering personal advice along with encouragement to complete high school and to make good career choices. After youth complete their work experience, they return time and again to reconnect with their former supervisors.

### Success Stories

Luke Senst is a senior at Wabasso High School. He's been working with the Youth Employment Program since he was a freshman, and has had the opportunity to experience several different jobs, including the City of Wabasso, The Pitz Stop, Wabasso High School, Wabasso Implement, Salfer's Food Center and the Prairie Gardener. Luke is the president of the Wabasso FFA chapter, the photographer for school events for The Wabasso Standard, participates in the Redwood Falls Police Explorers Ride Along Program, and plans to attend college next year for law enforcement at Normandale College. Luke receives academic credit as part of his school's Work Experience programming.

Justin Schaefer is a junior at Dawson-Boyd High School. He's been working with the Youth Employment Program for the past year and a half as a custodial assistant with the school. During that time, he has become a valuable member of the maintenance staff, taking on more and more duties as time goes on. He's a very willing and enthusiastic worker, and his supervisors enjoy having him as an employee. A special needs student, Justin also receives academic credit as part of his school's Work Experience programming. Both Luke and Justin were honored by The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council as Outstanding Youth Program Participants! Congratulations to them!





**Outcomes At-A-Glance**

|  |
|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |
| Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan counties in South Central Minnesota |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |
| Sandy Opegard, Director<br>South Central Workforce Council<br>464 Raintree Road<br>Mankato, MN 56001                     |
| (507) 549-3452   |

**Participant Information**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 86  |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 400 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 49  |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 262 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 9   |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 24  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 24  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 46  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 20  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 11  |

**South Central Minnesota**

**Program Summary**

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

**Academic Credit and Leadership Development**

MVAC partners with 18 school districts to offer a Summer Youth Employment and Training Program based on a service learning model. Students earn academic credit for participating in Community Service projects which reinforce reading and math skills. Youth gain leadership skills by providing a meaningful service to their community. Several youth in the summer program participated in Craig Hillier's Breakthrough Leadership Training, a workshop provided by the South Central Workforce Youth Council.

**Work Experience/Career Exploration**

Youth explore careers through career assessments, job shadowing, paid work experiences and internships. Case managers recruit worksites that match youth interest and abilities. One youth participated in a job shadowing experience at a small engine repair shop. Following the job shadowing experience, the employer stated they felt the youth had the potential to be an employee at the shop. The youth said that by doing the job shadow he found out that he, "would be interested in getting a job there."

**Partnering with Other Youth Service Agencies**

MVAC partners with the several area Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTIC). This past year the Mankato area CTIC put on a work skills competition held at South Central Technical College. Interviewing skills, applications, and problem solving were some of the competitions. MVAC works closely with local schools including alternative schools, county human services, law enforcement, Job Corps and post secondary schools for referral purposes as well as coordination of activities.

**Program Impact**

Eighty eight percent of Summer Youth participants received academic credit for completing the program. Five youth graduated as a result of the program. All other students returned to school this fall.

**WIA and MYP Programs**

The summer program serves both WIA and MYP participants.



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

## Out-of-School Services

MVAC assists out-of-school youth to help them complete high school or obtain a GED by linking youth to appropriate educational institutions, alternative schools or GED preparation classes. Opportunities are provided to explore military, apprenticeship or post-secondary education institutions. Youth gain occupational skills through classroom training and paid work experience. Work-readiness activities including job search skills and positive work habits are provided to youth to help them learn how to obtain and maintain employment. Youth are also connected with local workforce centers.

## Success Story

Jacob Klossner participated in the Summer Youth Employment and Training Program during the summer of 2002 and was enrolled into the WIA year round program. Jacob began attending Riverbend Day Treatment in New Ulm to address some difficulties he was having at school and home.

In January of 2003, as a result of overcoming some of his difficulties, Jacob successfully transitioned from Riverbend Day Treatment to Riverbend Alternative Learning Center. He also began a work experience through the WIA program in the maintenance department at the Brown County Courthouse.

Jake worked at the Brown County Courthouse during the spring of 2003 and again during the 2003-2004 school year. He continued to work hard and get better at his job. He started to take more initiative and was more motivated. He rarely missed a day of work and was always on time. His supervisor, Kim Williams, stated that Jacob's improvement in the last 2 years working with him was remarkable. He added that Jacob is now more outgoing and gets along with all of his co-workers. Kim said that "Jake has a lot of potential, is very patient, and has a lot of abilities that will make him successful."

Jake graduated from New Ulm Public High School in June of 2004 and is currently working through the DNR Conservation Corps. He earns a \$900 per month stipend and receives health insurance. He also has the opportunity to earn a \$4,500 stipend to use towards his post-secondary education. Jake's career goal is to attend a four-year college to get a degree in law enforcement, specializing in the K-9 unit because of his love for animals. In July of 2004, Jacob was awarded the MVAC Brown County Achiever Award.



## Outcomes At-A-Glance

|  |
|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |
| Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele and Wabasha Counties in southeastern Minnesota |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |
| Randy Johnson, Director<br>SE Minnesota Workforce Development, Inc.<br>1016 Civic Center Drive NW<br>Rochester, MN 55901 |
| (507) 292-5153   |

## Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 311 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 257 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 112 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 98  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 71  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 56  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 54  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 6   |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 77  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 8   |

## Southeast Minnesota Workforce Development, Inc.

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

### Program Summary

Workforce Development, Inc provides services that help participants respond to the stages of development that they will encounter as youth. WDI designs components and layers activities to offer youth the opportunity to improve skill levels in key areas of life. This strategy recognizes two basic concerns for youth; staying in school and finding employment. WDI youth programs offer youth a variety of activities related to life, work and career preparation activities. Included in those activities are subsidized employment, personal and career mentoring, computer skill enrichment, GED preparation, occupational skills to secure employment and assistance with college-based training. Counselors work with youth in focus groups as well as one-on-one to address their barriers to self-sufficiency and assist them to meet individual goals.

### Focus on Out-of-School Youth

Our focus on out-of-school youth has motivated us to make some changes in how we deliver programs in Southeast Minnesota. One of the most notable outcomes is the development of "Zones" in three of our WorkForce Centers. Each "Zone" is slightly unique because it was designed by youth in the local community and reflects their individual input. Youth coming into the WorkForce Center are attracted to the bright signs and easy access to resource materials that are selected to specifically meet the needs of the young adult population. Computers are available marked with websites and Internet resources to answer questions that the young adults may have. Youth gain confidence as they use the "Zone" and identify new resources to add to the ones already available there.

### Work-Based Learning Projects

The projects are 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. Most projects are in partnership with city, county or other community-based organizations in the local community. One of the favorite projects is the "Summer Readers" program held 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 English through games and fun activities. One day a week was reserved for field trips where the student-teachers and children 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 to learn about nature and animals. In addition to being fun for the children, the 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.

### Success Story--Pricilla

Pricilla entered the Workforce Development program when she was 17. At that time, she was enrolled in the alternative school here but was not happy and considering dropping out. She was in the ninth grade for the third year and graduation looked impossible. She hated school, was always in trouble, and never felt that she belonged. Pricilla was involved in the juvenile justice system, and she had very little work experience.

While in the WDI Youth Connections program, Pricilla attained her GED and gained work readiness skills to find employment. She also started participating in the

Cosmetology Program at Riverland Community College and was well on her way to a career. She studied hard, graduated from the Cosmetology Program with honors and passed her Boards on her first try, receiving her state Cosmetology License. Pricilla accepted a job at a local salon.

Pricilla has great advice for other young people like herself: “prove everybody wrong”, “stay strong”, “keep going at your goal” and “just because you’ve been where you have and done what you’ve done, that doesn’t mean you can’t be better”. And for those who would use children as an excuse, Pricilla says “instead of saying that you can’t do it BECAUSE of them, do it FOR them!” Pricilla never lost sight of her goal. She says she has always known what she wanted to do. There have just been a lot of distractions along the way.

Pricilla also has some advice for those who work with youth: “give them all a chance,” “get them to tell you their main goal and then LISTEN to them,” “take the extra step” and then “push them.” She states that WDI Youth Connections counselor drove her to her appointments, continued calling her even when she was screwing up, and always took the extra step and pushed her to get everything done and that helped her.



## Outcomes At-A-Glance

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>  |  |
| Hennepin County   |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>  |  |
| John McLaughlin, Director<br>Hennepin County Training &<br>Employment Assistance<br>300 South 6th Street<br>Minneapolis, MN 55487 |  |
| (612) 348-5203  |  |

## Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 237 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 524 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 177 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 329 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 22  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 29  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 41  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 122 |

# Hennepin County Training and Employment

## Program Summary

The summer employment program is the principal youth employment activity of the Hennepin County portion of WSA #9. Employment services are provided by Tree Trust, Hennepin's youth employment service provider. In partnership, Hennepin County and Tree Trust provide a hands-on work program for suburban Hennepin youth ages 14-21.

Youth in the summer employment and training program are assessed as to their employment training needs and are placed in one of three types of work experience:

- Group Site Employment:** This work experience includes work in parks, play grounds, and nature centers located in suburban municipalities and school districts. One hundred seventy eight youth were employed on the crews at group sites during the summer of 2004. Youth complete landscape and light construction projects such as retaining walls, walk bridges, and staircases. They work in a ratio of one site supervisor for every eight youth with a full-time supervisor and mentor. These positions are generally best suited for youth that need some extra support and work best in a team environment.
- Scattered Site Employment:** This work experience type, developed for youth seeking traditional employment experiences, is individual placements in non-profit organizations and/or schools. A total of 60 youth were employed in individual placements at scattered sites during the summer of 2004. These placements are primarily indoor placements. Youth have a choice of jobs including childcare, clerical, recreation aide, or custodial. These positions are best suited to youth with higher ability levels and the ability to work independently.
- Special Needs Youth Employment:** This work experience type addresses the employment goals in the Individual Education Plans of Special Needs Youth. One hundred forty eight youth were employed at special needs individual placements at scattered sites during the summer of 2004. Tree Trust partners with a handful of agencies to develop worksites and provide supportive services for participants that need extra support- as indicated by their assessment- to have a successful job experience. Supportive services include job coaches, usually from the youth's home school districts, and special transport.

## Work Experience

Hennepin County and Tree Trust have created partnerships with agencies and municipalities that offer a wide range of work experiences for suburban Hennepin youth. This summer, 386 youth worked at 53 agencies and completed 46 projects in nine cities and municipalities.

Over 200 youth gained skills by working at individual placements at scattered sites in the community:

- Participants learned clerical skills at worksite such as Park Center High School, the Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, Hmong American Mutual Assistance Association, the American Cancer Society and the Rockford Road Library.
- Participants gained childcare skills by working at sites such as LaCreche Early Childhood Center, the Bloomington Art Center and the Learning Center for Children.
- Participants gained experience in custodial skills working at sites such as the Community Emergency Assistance Program, the Maple Grove Community Center, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

One participant commented on her experience at her worksite: "My experience this summer has prepared me for future jobs by developing confidence."

Nearly 180 youth gained skills by completing landscape and construction projects at parks in the communities of Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina, Golden Valley, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, Plymouth and Maple Grove.

Project highlights included:

- Installation of a 640 ft timber edger around two playgrounds
- Constructed two 36 square foot timber pads and installed park benches
- Constructed a timber staircase with 32 feet of attached retaining wall
- Constructed a 40 foot modular block edger around a park sign
- Constructed two modular block planters
- Constructed a floating boardwalk

A parent of one of the crew participants commented about her son's experience: "I love the Tree Trust program. (My son) had a summer full of experiences he will never forget."

Three additional topics should be noted in relation to these work experiences:

- **Work-based learning:** Youth in these work experience programs learn skills the most effective way possible – by doing. Supervisors teach skills and the participant has the opportunity to practice and hone those skills immediately. Another effective learning component, used in the group site work experience, is the on-site computer lessons that directly connect work and learning. The lessons include creating spreadsheets to track the cost of the project and writing a letter to the community to inform them what the crew is doing in their park.
- **Academic Credit:** Participants employed through Hennepin youth programs have the opportunity to earn academic credit. Through a relationship with the Northeast Metro Area Learning Center participants can earn up to two elective credits.
- **Rewards/Recognition:** Each participant receives recognition for their hard work and success at the end-of-summer-picnic. Local politicians and city officials speak to the youth to let them know how much their work is valued and appreciated. Each participant receives an award certificate and a select few are honored with the Governor's Award.

## Program Impact

Preliminary results from the 2004 summer program survey show close to a 95% satisfaction rate with the program from both parents and participants. Cities and agencies that partner with Hennepin County and Tree Trust to provide work sites also demonstrate a high level of satisfaction from the projects that are completed in their parks and the work that is done at their agencies.

## MYP and WIA Programs

The combination of MYP and WIA funding makes it possible to serve the most number of youth with a quality program. By blending the programs when possible, youth are exposed to a wide variety of services that increase their long-term employability and skill attainment.

## Out-of-School Services

Hennepin's Out-of-School services provide opportunities for youth to participate in work readiness training including paid work experience, career exploration, vocational counseling and job search training. Participants also receive job placement assistance upon completion of the program as well as long-term follow-up.



## Outcomes At-A-Glance

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |  |
| Carver County  |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |  |
| Jim Broucek, Director<br>Carver County Community<br>Social Services<br>600 East 4th Street<br>Chaska, MN 55318 |  |
| (952) 361-1710   |  |

## Participant Information

|   |    |
|---|----|
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 44 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 39 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 7  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 6  |

## Carver County

The Carver County Summer Youth Work Experience Program (CCSYWP) provides youth with the opportunity to learn about responsible on-the-job behavior as well as earning money to stay in school or return to school. The Summer Youth Program assists eligible youth with little or no work experience to find a summer job and learn valuable occupational and life skills. This program provided work experience for 43 youths (16 females and 27 males) at twelve non-profit worksites.

The regular work experience program employed 18 youth who also worked at non-profit sites. Several youths worked in maintenance. Two worked at Ridgeview Medical Center in the maintenance department; their duties included painting, grounds keeping, cleaning and assisting the maintenance crew members. One youth worked as a custodian at one of the local churches and schools while four other youths worked as custodians for the Watertown School District. Their responsibilities included the custodial duties of cleaning classrooms, hallways, lockers, washing windows and cleaning bathrooms.

Another group of youths worked in clerical or administrative positions. One was employed with Ridgeview Medical Center in Waconia as a clerical assistant and his tasks involved scanning documents, filing, copying and typing. Three youths were placed at different sites in clerical assistance positions in city offices such as the Watertown Library, Chaska Historical Society and the Chaska Chamber of Commerce. Those youth answered phones, took messages, prepared mailings and special projects, general office duties and some cleaning.

A third area of focus was in the health care area or with recreational activities. Four youth worked as recreational and activity aides at different locations. Of those four, three youths worked in health care positions at the two local nursing homes in Carver County, Waconia Good Samaritan and Auburn West Nursing Home. The duties they performed included assisting in recreational activities, one-to-one time with residents, passing water, gathering residents for activities and light house keeping. The fourth youth worked as a playground assistant at the Chaska Community Center. His duties included supervising games and projects, checking kids in and out of the program and assisting in supervising field and bus trips. A new position was created in the physical therapy department at the Waconia Good Samaritan Health Care Center where a youth transported residents to and from their apartments and rooms. This youth also assisted the physical therapy staff.

A worksite at the Carver-Scott Educational Coop's Farm Program in Waconia employed eleven youth. This program introduced them to the work world and the many different aspects of farm management. They performed a variety of tasks such as garden maintenance (weeding), cleaning animal barns and pens, bailing hay, fixing fences, building a deck and patio, pouring cement for sidewalk, painting, and building horse stalls. They were also involved in helping prep for the We Can Ride Tackle Sale and were volunteers as walkers when the kids rode the horses. From working at the Farm Program, they learned work procedures such as following instructions, conflict resolution, communicating with co-workers and supervisors, completing a time card, withholding taxes and problem solving.

The Youthbuild project is a service program where high school students learn construction trade skills, work behavior skills, academic skills and service to the community. Ten youths participated in the Summer Program. These students each earned up to four credits in Math, English, Construction trades and Services Learning. These summer youth continued the construction progress on a model home that was previously started earlier with Youthbuild during the regular school year. There were four youth who participated in the VOS program (Vocational Outreach Services) through School District 287. These participants worked hard during the five week duration of the program. Their work was centered around the area of retail, grounds keeping and clerical duties. Youth had the opportunity to continue learning work skills by following directions, staying on task, establishing organizational skills and working as a team member.

All summer work experience participants were encouraged to develop and practice their “basic skills” of listening, speaking, reading, writing and mathematics. They were asked to listen and respond to their supervisor’s requests, go through a lengthy application and orientation process, and to fill out and complete a time card. The youths were also given the opportunity to develop their thinking skills by improving their decision making and problem solving abilities. By enhancing and developing these skills, they were able to learn how “work” can increase their self-esteem, responsibility, and the value of honesty and integrity in the workplace. For example, they systematically learned how their actions affected not only themselves but others with whom they worked. If they did not show up for work, someone had to do their work. The Summer Youth Program also encouraged the development of interpersonal skills such as being a contributing team member. It also taught them about leadership skills and working with and through diversity. In addition, they learned about respecting others who may be different from them. Another valuable skill they learned was being resourceful and managing their use of time and money. For most, this was their first time working, so learning about budgeting was a new experience and concept for them. In many of their positions, the youths were given the opportunity and trusted with prioritizing their tasks.

All summer work experience youths were required to complete an assessment. The youths that participated in Summer Youthbuild were required to complete a CAI (Career Assessment Inventory). The youth who worked at the farm and at regular worksites were required to complete a Work Assessment. After their results were completed, youths were given resources to further investigate and explore their own careers. At the end of the summer program, each youth was given a certificate of completion for the 2004 Summer Youth Program.

### Impact of the Program

The youth that participated in this summer program had the opportunity to have a positive effect on their communities. They were willing to learn new things, obtain useful skills and they were willing to give back to the community in the jobs they performed. Parents noticed and reported several positive transformations in their son or daughter during their work experience. Attitudes and outlooks dramatically changed towards work, school and the value of a hard days work. But more importantly, these youths saw a change in themselves. A great sense of self-esteem was established through helping others, in giving back to the community, and earning a pay check. During several monitoring visits it was clearly made known by the supervisors, through youth evaluations and the conversations, that they were very pleased with the work performance of the participants. Many requested that the youth have the opportunity to return next year as an employee.

### Out-of School Services

The Farm Program and Youthbuild provide out-of-school youth work experiences they may not have had the chance to participate in or learn from. However, youth are not necessarily limited to these two programs and can choose other work experience sites.





## Outcomes At-A-Glance

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |  |
| Scott County   |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |  |
| Jean Sinell, E&T Supervisor<br>WorkForce Center--Scott<br>County<br>752 Canterbury Road S.<br>Shakopee, MN 55379 |  |
| (952) 496-8273   |  |

## Participant Information

|   |    |
|---|----|
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 52 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 24 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 7  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 4  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 1  |

## Scott County

### Program Summary

Notices went out to Scott County agencies, schools, past participants and public entities that focus on youth about the programs that are being offered for the summer. Programming included work experience in public sectors and academic credit, combined with paid work experience to a targeted group.

### Work Experience

All work experiences in Scott County are unique. They are located in the communities of the youth so transportation problems are at a minimum and that it exposes the youth to the different jobs in their area. Many youth are not aware of the 'behind the scenes' jobs that are in the facilities that they occupy:

- What it takes to get a school ready for a new year (both in the office and custodial departments)
- The meals that are prepared for the senior citizens
- The offices that serve the residents of their communities
- Get an idea what retail would be like
- How to maintain public buildings
- Customer service and sensitivity to clients/participants

Youthbuild and Murphy's Landing have been successful for more than five years in assisting youth behind in credits to work, gain academic credits and the understanding of how school subjects actually pertain to work.

### Alternative Schooling/Tutoring/Study Skills Training

Carver Scott Educational Cooperative participated with Scott County programming to acclimate credits for Youthbuild and Murphy's Landing. This summer was the first time that the Basic Skills Test stood in the way of a participant to get her high school diploma. A tutor was located to help this youth study for the upcoming test.

### Preparation for Employment

Youth that participated in the Youthbuild program study the careers in the trades' profession. Several of the youth monitored expressed the interest in pursuing a career in that field even after grueling hours exposed in the weather.

### Program Impact

This year twenty six youth gained academic credits. One youth got a permanent job as a custodian after three summers in the summer program as a custodian.

### MYP and WIA Programs

Applicants that are potential dropouts are not eligible for WIA but are able to be a part of the program through MYP. This enabled more youth to participate in the summer youth program of Scott County.

### Out of School Services

- Scott County had 13 youth that were out of school.
- Four of them were special needs students that were placed in work experiences with job coaches to expand their skills.
- Eight of the 13 are enrolled in advanced transition training through the vocational schools for the fall.
- Three of the 13 got permanent jobs: a custodian, fast food worker and night manager following the summer program.
- Three of them needed to get the credits to complete their high school diploma. One completed her credits to get her diploma.
- Four were employed upon entering the program and have retained their jobs.

## City of Minneapolis

### Program Summary

Minneapolis WIA Youth Employment and Training participants have the opportunity to receive year round intensive case management services through a community-based delivery system. Case managers assist youth in setting work readiness, occupational and educational goals following an assessment period in which the youth's barriers and avenues for overcoming those barriers are addressed. Approximately 200 Minneapolis Public School (MPS) Special Needs youth benefit from year round WIA participation. Under the advisement of an MPS Job Coach, youth experience gainful employment during the summer months and individualized WIA goal setting during the school year. As one high school special needs supervisor reported, "Students with disabilities have almost no other time in their high school year to get this amount of positive work experience in the community. With the support of job coach interpreters at the community sites, the students gain skills, self-esteem, build a resume and often the jump start to being gainfully employed independently in their adult future."

Approximately 60 non-profits provide learning rich summer work for hundreds of youth during the summer that includes such added benefits as an educational component, a mentorship program and an environmental camp experience.

### Work Experience

Eastside Neighborhood Services (ENS) at Luxton Park was one of the 60 non-profits who employed youth through the Summer Youth Employment and Training Program. ENS expected their summer youth worker to actively participate in ELL classes for Somali elders. The youth worker accomplished this by helping the teachers instruct Somali elders about life in America, as well as use of the English language. These youth helped Somali elders to practice English, prepared goals for class, assisted with social activities and acted as a classroom assistant. As the youths' supervisor stated, "Our Somali youth worker did an outstanding job in assisting teachers who were conducting English and citizenship instruction to Somali elders. He translated concepts and he sometimes substituted for teachers by teaching English and computer classes. He participated in organizing cultural events and safety programs. Elders appreciated that a Somali youth was capable of contributing to their learning."

### Program Impact

The particular impact associated with the ENS Luxton Park site was in the area of empowerment. A youth teaching an elder how to navigate within their community was empowering for both parties. The youth worker was empowered by knowing that he contributed to the knowledge gained by his Somali elders and the elders learned to respect the youth for the information he shared.

At another site, a supervisor had this to say: "Initially, our youth worker had a problem with tardiness. At the end, she realized the effect this had within her assigned classroom. Fortunately, she learned to interact with the children and formed relationships with individual children. She became a positive role model by displaying appropriate behaviors and work ethics."

Program success is measured during the youths bi-weekly progress review. Six distinct areas are evaluated for skill review: reading, math, communication, responsibility, socialability and decision making are all critical to the success of the program and are the basis for the supervisor/youth worker dialog every two weeks.

### MYP and WIA Programs

MYP and WIA programs are linked in the City of Minneapolis. All of the year round WIA providers refer youth to the MYP program; some of them are vendors for both programs. In addition, this year STEP UP (our new private sector program) helped to leverage these programs and act in a laddering capacity. The City of Minneapolis has always combined resources in order to provide quality experiences for Minneapolis

### Outcomes At-A-Glance

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |  |
| City of Minneapolis  |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |  |
| Chip Wells, Director<br>Minneapolis Employment &<br>Training Program<br>105 5th Avenue S.<br>Minneapolis, MN 55401 |  |
| (612) 673-6221   |  |

### Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 783 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 408 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 304 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 40  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 31  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 10  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 184 |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 203 |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 32  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 9   |

youth. Youth development goals are more adequately achieved due to our efforts to fuse the funding sources and offer the most personalized services to all participants.

## Out-of-School Services

Six year round youth providers connect out-of-school youth to a variety of services, depending upon their individual need. Abraham Lincoln School for New Americans and American Indian OIC, both alternative schools, provide for the re-connection link for many youth. The other four vendors provide whatever it takes to move out-of-school forward following the construction of the Individual Service Strategy. As a WIA vendor, they are required to set and obtain short- and long-term youth development goals that are constructed during the case manager/youth relationship. Successful outcomes depend upon the intent of the goal set.

## Career Exploration

During WSA 10's 2004 summer educational component, C.L.A.S.S. (Center for Learning Academic and Survival Skills), 91 percent of returning students completed career interest and other exploration activities using the 2004 Minnesota Careers guide. Of the 291 students in C.L.A.S.S., 71 received high school credit for their work.

## Preparation for Employment

STEP UP developed a Student Handbook for the work readiness training which was given to each student in attendance. Topics included: Interview preparation, mock interviews, and professional behavior. Additional information included: conducting an informational interview, child labor laws, resume writing and customer service.

## Private Sector Involvement

The STEP UP program was spearheaded by two corporate champions, US Bank and the Star-Tribune. Both companies provided ten learning rich jobs for youth and worked to solidify additional jobs in the private sector with other large companies such as Xcel Energy and Target Corporation. The corporate champions spoke on behalf of youth, offered training within their companies during the summer, spoke at the STEP UP kick off and end of summer celebrations and handed out certificates of completion to youth who completed the STEP UP program.

## Success Story--Millie Hernandez

At age 7, while living in the Little Earth Neighborhood, Emilia (Millie) was a Girl's Group participant (mentee) in the Young Women's Mentoring Program offered through YouthCARE. Millie says, "Girls Group always provided girls with a safe place to have fun. It was the place I went to get the positive attention that I never got at home. I liked how the mentors always made me feel good about myself. Since I was a little girl, I always dreamed of growing up and being a mentor in Girls Group. I wanted to make someone else feel good about herself."

At the age of 14, Millie finally became a Girls Group Mentor while working through METP and still today, at the age of 16, Millie continues to be an incredible leader at YouthCARE and in the Little Earth community. During the summer of 2004, Millie worked in the YouthCARE office and made significant gains in computer literacy, organizational skills, public speaking and leadership skills. She was a part of a youth group who met with WSA 10's Private Industry Council, WIA Youth Council as well as City Council members. She connected with City Council member Don Samuels during the visit and since then has met with him at his office. "YouthCARE girls and adults tell me so many positive things about me. They give me my much needed self-esteem. I began to want to do more positive things with my life," said Millie.

"The best part: I am able to inspire kids to believe they can achieve what ever they set their mind to do. Working with youth is a great experience that I would recommend to other teens. If you ever come across the chance to work with youth I feel that it's important to take on that challenge and see how you can positively impact the lives of younger people," said Hernandez.



## Anoka County

The Anoka County Youth Program offers year-round employment and training services to youth in partnership with school districts and other area agencies. The WorkForce Center youth staff provide direct service such as guidance and counseling, supportive services, work experience and placement, the links to employers in the area and occupational information as well as follow up services. All participants begin with an assessment of their needs for program services completing an application for eligibility, getting school information, basic skills testing and individual and group meetings with youth staff.

The Anoka County Summer Youth Employment Program still serves the largest number of youth during the year and the participants are generally younger. Workforce staff and referring partner agency staff assess needs and determine if the participant will continue to receive year-round services. Working with alternative education programs, special needs students and other at-risk youth, completion of secondary educational programs, preparation for more skilled training and readiness for the workplace are the primary goals. Offering another setting where youth can be successful and pairing them with an adult for support gives at-risk youth a way to respond positively.

The Anoka County Youth Program partners with the MFIP participants to offer work experience, post-secondary training and support. The Transition and Customized Employment Program (TCE, an ODEP funded grant) has also worked closely with the youth program to assist with placement, training and helping young people with disabilities become familiar with WorkForce Center services.

### Work Experience

Employment opportunities were offered in a number of different jobs and at a variety of work sites including: park and recreation programs, clerical and offices, daycare centers, schools, retail stores, county and city parks. Supervisors were given individual orientations with worksite learning, work habits training and adult mentoring encouraged while supervising their youth workers. Many supervisors have worked with the program for years and not only are positive adult role models for summer workers but establish on-going mentoring relationships during the school year. After a worker left without giving notice the supervisor commented, "We want to teach these kids how to not burn bridges and to say goodbye to co-workers. This will be an important part of their future."

Worksites were either individual placements of participants or the establishment of crews during the summer. Our ability to offer employment services as a part of the program is what really attracts the 14- and 15-year-old students to the summer program. For most of these youth (especially younger ones), this is their first job and is frequently their only realistic possibility for a job. A collaborative effort with Anoka-Hennepin Schools provides summer work experience for students with disabilities. Transportation services and job coaches are provided by the school district and the youth program handles the payroll.

### Program Impact

Centennial Schools partner with the summer program to provide summer enrichment with a work experience component. The curriculum includes career exploration, job search, food preparation, physical activities, and field trips. The mother of a participant commented that her son "...gets so much out of the summer program that it carries over into the school year. Anything that helps him be positive about academics and stay in school is something we want to continue."

### MYP and WIA Programs

These two funding sources work together well for providing year-round services for participants. MYP is used mainly to fund the summer program and work experience wages and WIA funding is added to serve those in the year-round program. Eligibility

## Outcomes At-A-Glance

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|---|
| <b>Area Served</b>  |
| Anoka County  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>  |
| Jerry Vitzthum, Director<br>Minnesota WorkForce Center--<br>Anoka County<br>1201 89th Ave. NE<br>Blaine, MN 55434 |
| (763) 783-4800  |

## Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 56  |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 151 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 40  |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 121 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 4   |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 13  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 24  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 36  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 10  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 5   |

for both is checked at intake and if the need is recognized or requested for ongoing participation, the staff person will enroll eligible youth in WIA. For MFIP participants who are co-enrolled in MYP and/or WIA, funds help with tuition, work experience and support for that parent while in school. The more flexible eligibility criteria in MYP and the ability to have youth dual enrolled, helps operate the program more efficiently.

### Out-of-School Services

The young adults served as out-of-school participants generally are referred from the MFIP staff or from alternative schools and are frequently high school dropouts needing assistance entering the workforce. Completion of secondary school with a diploma or GED is normally the first goal if its needed. Additional training needs are assessed and sometimes work maturity and work readiness skills are needed before the participant moves on to an occupational training program.

### Alternative Schooling/Preparation for Employment

The Anoka County Youth Program has been a partner with Anoka Hennepin's Bell Center that serves special needs students. Referrals have been made for both in-school and summer participation. One student this past year started working at the Banfil Locke Center for the Arts, a gallery and school located in Fridley. A job coach was present during the school year to acclimate this student to this site. During the summer--with the help of a mentor--the student worked four days a week and made great progress relating to her supervisor, co-workers and visitors to the Center.



### Partnerships with Other Youth Serving Agencies

Touring and an orientation to the WorkForce Center has become a regular part of a number of high schools, alternative schools and foster care programs curricula in Anoka County. With the relationships that have been established, the information that has been distributed, and recruitment of youth participants, many schools and agencies have become familiar with what the WorkForce Center has to offer and frequently schedule visits for youth. With a major goal of the Transition and Customized Employment (TCE) project to get young adults with disabilities familiar with the services of WorkForce Centers, project staff have worked to bring people into job fairs, training fairs, provide career exploration services, search for jobs, share work experience worksites and attend workshops. A TCE staff person was also housed in the WorkForce Center to facilitate work experiences, conduct workshops and work with young people with disabilities.

### Success Story--Amanda

Amanda originally came into the WorkForce Center and started working with an MFIP counselor. She was going to have a baby in a few months, had just left a job, was 20 years old living on her own and needed support to live. She had completed an administrative assistant training program and worked at some clerical jobs. The youth program needed someone to develop private sector jobs and match them with summer applicants. Amanda was hired and trained to work with the youth program and as a receptionist. She worked until her baby boy was born in July and then returned to work in September.

Amanda was able to work out a lot of things in her life while working and getting support at the WorkForce Center. She found childcare that she liked so she could work full-time. She was receiving bus passes to get to work because she had lost her license. After she got her license back, she was able to get a car loan through CEAP and purchase a car. Some of her work habits needed improvement and they were addressed by her counselor and supervisor while she continued to work full-time. She developed a positive work history and references as well as additional office and customer service skills.

Amanda then began to search for a permanent full time job. After a number of leads, she got a job as a medical receptionist. She needed to study and become familiar with more medical terminology in order to do her job. Amanda was able to successfully make the transition as a young single mom from receiving public assistance to a full-time job and providing for her family.

## Dakota County

### Program Summary

Dakota County provides services to economically disadvantaged and at-risk youth through four separate venues and three contracted providers. Twin Cities Tree Trust operates the summer youth employment program and is funded through the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). WIA Youth Program contractors have developed a Youth Competency System which addresses work-readiness skills, career exploration, skills identification and job search savvy.

The Employment and Training Center (ETC) at Dakota County Technical College (DCTC) typically works with pregnant and parenting teens who were Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) participants. The Youth Competency System prepares them for post-secondary school, employment, and community involvement. In 2005, ETC will be working closely with the Upward Bound Program at DCTC. This program offers academic assistance to young people who are often the first in their families to attend college. ETC will supply the career piece and will offer other services as well.

Tree Trust also operates a WIA Youth program for young people in the Transitions Plus program in Apple Valley. These youth are individuals with special needs who are completing a post high school program designed to help them achieve a high school diploma. Tree Trust provides individual assistance to the youth helping them to grow in independence and leadership.

Dakota County participants receive career exploration and work readiness instruction through a Youth Competency System; they are guided toward employment, post secondary options and enhanced life skills. Youth are referred from social services, the MFIP program, the Juvenile Correction Center and word of mouth. Significantly, youth can--and do--find the WorkForce Center's youth Zone on their own.

### Work Experience

Tree Trust operates eight outdoor work crews at four sites as well as 34 individual placements. Youth are paid more than minimum wage and have the chance to receive two raises during the summer. The clearest benefit to youth, apart from the pay, is the intensive coaching they receive from either their crew leader or their site supervisor and the team spirit of the work. "It's outside and you have lots of people to bond with," remarked one crew member. All involved with Tree Trust are driven by the mission to help young people achieve their full potential.



### Outcomes At-A-Glance

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |  |
| Dakota County  |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |  |
| Mark Jacobs, Director<br>Dakota County Workforce<br>Services<br>1 Mendota Rd. W., Suite 100<br>West St. Paul, MN 55118 |  |
| (651) 554-5622   |  |

### Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 113 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 281 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 55  |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 226 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 14  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 14  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 64  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 85  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 49  |

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## Program Impact

Whether it is a young person who is finally able to support herself and her child or a youth who sees a chance for success through education instead of crime, our young people's lives are profoundly affected by the work of our staff and programs. Whether it is a public space improved by a Tree Trust crew or a resident of a nursing home that has had direct contact with a youth participating in a service project, Dakota County youth are making an impact on the community. Our youth participants are focused on community engagement; they are led to see that their communities need their talents and energy. Because of our programs, youth are better prepared to pursue careers, stay in and succeed in school and see themselves as contributing members of society.

The community benefits by viewing young people as resources instead of liabilities.

Thanks to the Zone and its companion website, employment information is available directly to youth. The addition of employment advice and strategy content makes this both a destination site and a gateway to important employment and education and community links. "I wanted to see what was going on in my community for teens," states one youth. Site hits have gone past 7,000 and more than 550 additional youth have been reached through direct outreach programs, job fairs, school visits, etc.

## MYP and WIA Youth Program Coordination

In Dakota County, the MYP and WIA programs operate independently. Nevertheless, enrolled WIA youth who would benefit from a summer work experience may participate in the MYP summer youth program. Because MYP slots are offered on a "first-come, first served" basis, WIA youth receive registration material early in the year.

## Out-of-School Services

Seventeen youth previously out-of-school received either a diploma, GED or a recognized certificate; 55 were successfully placed in employment. Our three youth competency systems are geared to out-of-school youth who have dropped out of school or have been delayed in school. Using the competency system helps these youth in plotting a career course and following it either directly to the workplace or through a course of advanced studies.

## Private Sector Involvement

Dakota County has endeavored to bring private sector employers into greater partnership with our youth programs. When the Zone was funded with private dollars, we believed that more employers would take a greater interest in the emerging workforce. In 2004, Dakota Electric Association has asked the Youth Council to identify a winner of what will become an annual award for excellence in Youth Employment Services. This award will go to a program, individual or employer who has demonstrated a commitment to (and effectiveness in) preparing young people for the world of work. Publicity leading up to the award and around the actual recipient will, we hope, lead employers to recognize the potential of working with us and the youth we serve to support Dakota County's economy.

## Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

### Program Summary

A major new focus of the Work Experience program, tested in Summer 2004 and to be fully implemented this year is on the connection between work and formal learning. Each participating youth is required to consider his/her work experience job in the context of his/her education and document the connection through a simple form called the "Work Experience Skill Building Report." Counselors work with youth to ensure that they understand the purpose of the report: formal learning situations do have a connection to their well being in "real" life.

### Work Experience/Work-Based Learning

Work experience provides youth with an opportunity to learn specific skills as well as general work/job keeping skills and are provided through single site placements and group projects.

Youth are placed with the Community Design Program, an environmental project providing educational and practical experiences in protecting the environment. Youth learn skills in habitat restoration, reforestation, storm water treatment and environmental stewardship. The program targets neighborhood concerns such as cleaning up buckthorn or tending and distributing and/or selling garden flowers/vegetables. They tap into the U of M Extension and Agricultural School to teach seminars on a variety of environmental topics. Youth work four days per week and have one day of an educational component.

An example of work-based learning is the Express Bike Shop, a youth-directed business that offers young people the chance to learn and be actively involved in all aspects of a small business operation. In addition to intensive training in bicycle repair, the youth workers are thoroughly schooled in a variety of business skills including customer service, sales techniques, advertising and merchandising strategies, small business accounting and constructive communication.

Single site jobs include recreation/program aides, maintenance, childcare, retail, classroom aides and clerical positions. Academic credit is awarded to youth through the Hubbs Learning Center, 916 Area Learning Center or the youth's respective alternative programs.

### Program Impact

Work experience positions provide youth the opportunity to develop skills and experience in customer service, decision-making, leadership, budgeting, time management, conflict resolution and team building. Qualitative outcomes include things like noticeable growth in maturity, positive social interaction, confidence and initiative. Project completions and technical skills learned point to the quantitative outcomes.

A skill-building plan assists youth in identifying the transference of academic skills to work/life situations: Math comes into play in retail, business/accounting and teaching assistant work. Reading is inherent in most jobs – being able to understand employee handbooks, personnel forms, written directions, writing or in a job helping younger kids learn to read/reading to them; and several kinds of Science are used in a variety of positions such as earth science/chemistry/biology/ecology in the Community Design and Tree Trust projects, computer science in clerical, teaching assistant and program aide jobs, and social sciences in recreation aides, teaching assistants and program aide jobs.

Support services can have a huge impact on youth by providing a car repair, tools, interview/work clothes or emergency rent assistance so that participants can obtain/maintain employment or to enter and stay in school – secondary or post secondary.

### Outcomes At-A-Glance

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |  |
| Ramsey County  |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |  |
| Patricia Brady, Director<br>Workforce Solutions<br>2098 11th Avenue East<br>North St. Paul, MN 55109 |  |
| (651) 779-5651   |  |

### Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 296 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 300 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 107 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 85  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 66  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 48  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 105 |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 149 |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 46  |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 27  |



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## MYP and WIA Programs

Combining these programs allows us to serve a broad spectrum of youth, provide more services and allows for more flexibility in whom we enroll. Participants can receive additional support to assist them in completing or working towards their educational and career goals.

## Out-of-School Services

The WSA has actively participated in the St. Paul Schools Diploma Completion Program that recruits youth who have dropped out of school and provide work experience for them in conjunction with school re-enrollment. Re-enrollment in an alternative or GED program is planned for all participants who have not completed high school. Assistance is also provided in career/college exploration -- college visits, financial aid, scholarship research and identifying and enrolling youth in post secondary long term and short term training programs. Support services are also an important aspect of working with this population to assist them in stabilizing their situation so that they can concentrate on school, employment and their families.

## Success Story--Janaya

“We are extremely fortunate to have been able to work with Janaya. Whether it has been typing, copying, filing, finding resources, providing child care or classroom assistance she has done a wonderful job. Janaya truly has made a difference for us”, says Carol Seidenkranz, Janaya’s work experience supervisor.

At 15, Janaya dropped out of high school and moved out of her mom’s home. She eventually returned to high school only to drop out again at 18. She eventually found the Family Learning Program, which served as her high school, her worksite and her strong support system. WIA provided the work experience wages for her position with them. Being a student and a graduate of the program helped her develop into an indispensable employee. Carol, her supervisor, is a social worker for Mounds View Schools and was an excellent mentor and role model for Janaya who is currently taking classes toward major in social work.

Janaya jumped at opportunities to improve her computer skills and took classes paid for through the WIA program in Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Publisher. This training, added to her work experience, led to the opportunity to apply for several interesting job openings in the social service field.

An ad for her ideal job came along and her resume/cover letter got her a solid first interview, which led to promising second interview but failed to result in a job offer. Disappointed and frustrated, she eventually forced herself to believe that she didn’t get that job because there was a better one around the corner. She was right. A last minute faxed resume to Hamline University for a Receptionist/Program Assistant position ended up with a job offer and she started work a few days later.

The current chaos of working full time on one college campus, taking three evening classes on another campus, studying and, most importantly, parenting her daughter, is creating an exhilarating type of exhaustion. Janaya is looking forward to long-term employment with Hamline, taking advantage of the tuition assistance benefits provided to Hamline employees and a career in social services or journalism – or possibility a job that combines the two.

## 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 Washington County WorkForce Center include:

- assessment and service strategy
- paid work experience
- referral to community counseling resources
- work-based learning
- career decision making
- service corps learning
- financial assistance for post-secondary training
- referral to diploma, alternative diploma or ABE/GED/ELL programs
- academic credit coordination
- leadership development
- supportive services
- follow-up services

### Work Experience

Subsidized work placements at non-profits and public sites provide opportunities for young people to gain experience and good work habits. Youth are matched to sites based on interests, ability, and transportation. When a particular interest or need can only be met in the private sector, job development is done to secure a placement. In addition the youth program employment counselor coordinates with schools' work experience coordinators for placements and wage payment.

One youth has been in the work experience program for nearly 2 years. He started out at age 14 with no work experience. He attended an alternative school whose focus is on kids with significant behavioral issues. He was hired at the school as a janitorial aide. After working there for the school year he was placed at the White Bear Township Theater doing cleaning and has been there for just over a year. This past summer he began learning the projectionist job. He has demonstrated dependability and the ability to follow instructions and learn. His work placements have been the result of coordination between the school's placement and job coaching staff and the WorkForce Center's funding for wage and transportation. He was also able last year to begin attending a different alternative school because of behavioral improvements.

### 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. The program's incentive and disciplinary procedures are clear and fair, this helps youth learn what employer expectations are. Tree Trust projects are highly visible within the community. 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. Youth that work in non-profit and public agencies perform work that couldn't be completed in these agencies because of limited budgets and staffing.

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. Youth come away from completion of the job with a reference for future work.

### MYP and WIA

Our Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) dollars allow more youth with learning and

### Outcomes At-A-Glance

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>  |  |
| Washington County   |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>  |  |
| Robert Crawford, Division Manager<br>Washington County WorkForce Center<br>2150 Radio Drive<br>Woodbury, MN 55125 |  |
| (651) 275-8650  |  |

### Participant Information

|   |    |
|---|----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 23 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 43 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 21 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 33 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 2  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 12 |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 7  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 14 |

other disabilities to participate in work experience. Many of these youth have Individual Education Plans through school special education programs. The focus for them is on work and independent living skills, rather than the progressive gains in literacy and math that WIA focuses on.

## 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. Preparation for future work and skill training are emphasized through a focus on career exploration.

## 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.

## Work-Based Learning

Tree Trust jobs provide an excellent application for work-based learning. Youth apply basic math skills daily when measuring and fitting materials for the projects. Using laptop computers at the worksite, 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.

## Career Exploration

Youth participating in WorkForce Center programs have access to a variety of computer-based and other assessment and research tools to guide the career exploration process. In addition, the youth employment counselor is a career exploration workshop instructor for all WorkForce Center customers so youth can get expert guidance and feedback. Some out-of-school youth may participate in the workshop during the day, but most others will get one-to-one assistance with the employment counselor.

Assessment tools are chosen depending on the type of any previous assessments completed during school. The advantage of completing further assessment through the WorkForce Center is the one-to-one feedback and follow-up regarding the assessment results. School guidance counselors are usually assigned hundreds of students so detailed feedback and follow-up isn't realistic in most cases.

## Success Story--Vathana Chhom, Landfall

Vathana Chhom is 15 and has learned a lot about life—a lot of the right things. Listening to him talk about the ideals he holds and what he wants out of life one might forget he is just 15.

This summer he saved money from his summer job working as a bike mechanic to help his younger sister (age 10) buy school supplies and help his family with some of their expenses, as well as his own: "It makes it easier for them if I don't have to ask for money." His mom works 7 days a week, 2 jobs. He says his parents were surprised that he saved money for them. He learned about helping from his older brother who helped him.

He wants to make sure younger kids where he lives learn what's important, too: "I want to teach them the right way, [teach them not to] go the wrong way with gangs. I teach them to stay in school so they can get better jobs. I teach them respect for their parents and family, and to watch [their siblings'] backs." He has seen some kids turn around. He laughs, "One of my friends is doing better in school than me."

When asked how he learned all this, he hesitated a bit and then said, "from being in Cambodia and having nothing, having war." Vathana moved with his family from Cambodia to the U.S. when he was 8. His dad died when he was very young.

Vathana likes mechanical stuff. He spent time learning how to take apart and repair his own bike in the bike shop for a couple years, and went on rides organized by the program director. The neighborhood shop is run by a non-profit, Family Means. He learned the skills and passed the tests needed to be a mechanic. Because of his responsibility and leadership he was recruited to be a paid staff member.

He hopes what he learns will help him with college. He would like to "work on cars and build a house. I like to design and build." He will rely on his (step-)dad to help him make decisions for college. He trusts his dad; he doesn't always trust his own decisions.

For the future, Vathana wouldn't want war anymore. He wants to see people helping others.

## Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council

### Program Summary

Eligible youth of Stearns and Benton Counties receive services to enhance their career goals. Services of assessment, career exploration, journaling and reflection, team building, academic enrichment through research and development of community service projects, SCANS skills training and supportive services are used. The services are presented to the youth in a day camp setting during the summer and an after school program during the school year. Year round services of assessment, career exploration, work experience, on the job training, post secondary training, etc., are offered by a career planner who provides one-on-one career planning and goal development.

### 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 work site's job description are written into the learning plan. The work site supervisor assesses the youth's skill development and sets continued training goals. Upon achieving 95 percent competency of occupational skills a "Mastery of Skills Certificate" is issued. This benefits the work site with needed labor while the youth develops needed employability skills.

### Program Impact

Youth demonstrate the ability to retain work and/or remain in school. They demonstrate increased attendance at school and how to communicate and 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 receive Mastery of Employability Skills Certificates or Safety Certificates, number of goals obtained, and number who retain employment and wage gain. This summer, 98 percent completed Camp Challenge, 83 percent received Mastery of Employability Skills Certificates and 88 percent received safety awards. There was an average increase of one grade level in reading and math levels were maintained through the summer. In one part of Camp Challenge, the teams volunteered at "Kids Against Hunger," ([www.feedingchildren.org](http://www.feedingchildren.org)) and packaged food to be delivered to area communities and shipped around the world.

Because of this volunteer opportunity there will be over 12,000 people fed world wide. This year, younger youth in the WIA program achieved 80 percent of goals, and 100 percent of exiters obtained secondary school certificates. Of older WIA youth exiters, 100 percent entered employment, 100 percent retained employment with wage gain of \$11,145.00, and 72.7 percent obtained credentials.

### MYP and WIA Programs

MYP provides youth the opportunity to participate in Camp Challenge. 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.

### 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. Forty youth received services.

### Outcomes At-A-Glance

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>  |  |
| Stearns and Benton Counties   |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>  |  |
| Kathy Zavala, Director<br>Stearns-Benton Employment<br>and Training Council<br>3333 West Division St., Suite<br>212<br>St. Cloud, MN 56301-3783 |  |
| (320) 229-5702  |  |

### Participant Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 31  |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 105 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 12  |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 74  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 8   |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 23  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 20  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 26  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 17  |

## Work-Based Learning

A 21-day summer employability skills training camp named “Camp Challenge” provided 48 youth with experiential learning while developing and presenting projects regarding community hunger. A local college campus provided the setting for the camp. Youth were in teams of 8 members led by an experienced educator. Each team took responsibility for either increasing the capacity or awareness of community hunger. Youth were supported through academic enrichment, team building, problem solving, SCAN Skills, journaling, and the creative delivery of their service project. Youth demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach by having a 98 percent completion rate, practical application of SCAN Skills, journaling, and by successfully delivering their service project.



## Rewards/Recognition

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

## Success Story--Anthony Allen

At age 17, Anthony Allen of St. Joseph, Minnesota requested assistance in career planning and finishing high school. He enrolled in the PACE program through a local alternative school in St. Cloud. He was attending school part time and needed credits to graduate. He met with his career planner at SBETC weekly to develop career goals and to work on career assignments. As he completed his career assignments, he was given credits toward his high school completion. Because Anthony demonstrated the ability to complete his assignments on time and complete extra work, he was able to graduate early. He completed his high school diploma in March 2004.

Anthony chose the building trades as a career pathway. He narrowed his choice to masonry occupations. Because Anthony is a hands-on learner, he focused his continued education plan on the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers apprenticeship program. Anthony met with the apprenticeship coordinator at the apprenticeship training facility in St. Paul, Minnesota and completed his application for the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers pre-apprenticeship training program. Anthony took the Accuplacer test to demonstrate he had the math skills necessary for this training program and submitted his results with his application. Anthony would not find out if he was accepted for the training until June, 2004.

Anthony did not have a work history. As a part of his plan, he decided to develop a work history. His career planner secured a work experience placement for him with the City of Avon, Minnesota. Anthony worked for the City of Avon from April through June, 2004. He assisted with the maintenance of city parks, roads, etc. He demonstrated the mastery of Employability Skills for 95 percent competency for positive work habits and work related tasks. He was issued an Employability Skills Certificate on July 6, 2004 by his work site and Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council. Anthony also demonstrated the ability to work safely 100 percent of the time and earned a Safety Award issued by his work site and Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council.

In June, 2004, Anthony learned of his acceptance into the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local Union No. 1 of Minnesota's pre-job training program. His training started the following month and ended in late August. Anthony was awarded a certificate of completion. He immediately started applying to contractors and found a job within a span of a few days. Five days later, he began working as an apprentice. Anthony states, "If you put forth an effort, only good things are going to happen. Success is only a step away especially if you go to Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council."

## Winona County

### Program Summary/In-School and Out-of-School Services

Youth are referred to the Winona WorkForce Center in different ways: from the area schools, Community Education, Winona County Dept. of Human Services, Churches, Mental Health Services, ads that appear in the local newspapers or cable network or just 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 needing a GED, high school completion, career exploration and planning, secondary or post/secondary education assistance, job training, direct job placement, work experience or support services.

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

### Work Experience/Academic Credit

Youth are placed in individual worksites which have been 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 of the youth have little or no work experience, so these worksites offer, not only possible career choice experiences but also teach them the essential soft-skills necessary for a positive working experience, i.e.: getting to work on time, calling if unable to go to work, asking questions, responsibility, honesty and integrity. The youth are placed in public non-profit, county and state agencies. The jobs vary from clerical, dietary aides, custodial, childcare, gardening, nurse aide assistant, tour guides and silk-screen printing assistants.

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 Programs

#### Preparation for Employment/Mentors

Both programs may be offered to youth who meet the eligibility requirements. The MYP program primarily assists with the placement of youth in the summer and/or year-round program - providing work experience in a field of interest. Individuals who are enrolled in the WIA program, are generally those youth who are 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 learn "soft skills" and the skills of silk screen printing, using a variety of mathematical skills, shipping, computer skills, etc. Staff at the Sign Shop act as mentors to the youth.

### Success Story--Robert Pelozo

The Winona WorkForce Center started working with Robert the summer of 2002. He has had some problems following the rules of the community and has been involved

### Outcomes At-A-Glance

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|--|--|
| <b>Area Served</b>   |  |
| Winona County  |  |
| <b>Contact Information</b>   |  |
| Mike Haney, Director<br>Winona County Workforce<br>Council<br>1250 Homer Road, Suite 200<br>Winona, MN 55987 |  |
| (507) 453-2920   |  |

### Participant Information

|   |    |
|---|----|
| WIA Youth Served                                      | 22 |
| MYP Youth Served                                      | 32 |
| No. of WIA Youth With a Disability                    | 18 |
| No. of MYP Youth With a Disability                    | 24 |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)                       | 4  |
| No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)                       | 6  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) | 8  |
| Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) | 6  |
| No. of Teen Parents (WIA)                             | 10 |
| No. of Teen Parents (MYP)                             | 2  |

with community service. When Robert was first referred to us by the Special Education Community Work Experience Coordinator, he was experiencing some severe attendance problems and was behind in credits. He was also described as being a very social person, well liked by students and teachers alike. And, as with many teenagers, Robert had problems with following through with things.

Robert was placed at the National Sign Center for the remainder of that school year. During that time, Robert's work schedule was based on his attendance at school. He did wonders! Robert's mother called us several times, singing the praises of this program. She stated that not only were Robert's grades up, but he was attending school on a regular basis and was working hard at making up the credits he was behind on.

Robert graduated this year. He still struggles in some areas, but he has some really great recommendations from former supervisors and has learned valuable lessons while developing a better work ethic. Robert's advice? "Work hard but have fun, the time goes much faster!"

## Cooperative Workshop Project - Winona Area Learning Center

### Concept

This project was developed in the fall of 2003, as a replication of a successful pilot program originally implemented with the help of funding from the Winona Workforce Center. This project incorporates the entrepreneurial experience into the regular elective curriculum offered to WALC students in grades 10-12. Instructional goals for our students were as follows: (1) develop employability skills, such as reliable attendance, sense of personal responsibility to group, taking initiative, and communication with co-workers; (2) gain awareness of small business management procedures and issues; and (3) gain practical experience with production and sales.

### Implementation

The Coop Workshop was offered as an elective, with enrollment of 16-20 students in each class. To register, students needed to complete a brief application, including listing a staff member who could serve as a reference. They were asked to commit to at least 80% attendance and an acceptable level of class participation. Most students who registered were accepted. The class was team-taught by one regular education and one special education teacher, both with some personal experience in self-employment.

After initial brainstorming and team-building activities, students were introduced to the basic components of a business plan, with assistance from a guest speaker from a local bank. Using a simplified plan format, students were nonetheless expected to develop all the key components of an actual business plan, including business description, marketing strategy, management structure and financial projections. The grant funding was used so that seed money could be offered to the students to get their mini-businesses started. Once their plans were approved by their teachers, students could request funding for expenditures, with the understanding that all "loans" had to be paid back before they could keep any profits. They also engaged in focus groups or market surveys as part of their planning process.

Mini-businesses were started either individually or by groups of 2-4 students. Most involved making and selling products, such as candles, T-shirts, wooden planters, beaded key rings, and hemp jewelry. Other groups bought and re-sold food items, including candy, root beer floats, and soft drinks. Some projects encountered major problems and floundered for various reasons. Others paid back their loans and garnered their members a moderate profit, with some students clearing



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as much as \$40 to \$50 each over the course of the quarter. During group discussions, students shared ideas and updated each other on their progress. Fun activities reinforced learning, such as practicing bookkeeping as part of a Monopoly game, or using team communication skills to creatively solve a spur-of-the-moment design problem.

In addition to the experiential learning involved with their mini-businesses, students also had the opportunity to hear from a variety of local entrepreneurs who either came into class as guest speakers or hosted the class for field trips to their businesses. Speakers and field trips included the following types of self-employment: auctioneer, jewelry-maker/store owner, comic-and-games store owner, massage therapist, chemical dependency counselor, collectible toys sales, bike repair/sales, kayak maker, classic car sales, autobody service, upholstery service, and marine mechanic.

Students also viewed videos which discussed workplace issues such as communications, teamwork, and reliability. By these various means, students became familiar with the personal strengths needed for self-employment and with many of the advantages and disadvantages of being your own boss.

Toward the end of the quarter, students were assigned two final written projects. In “Your Fantasy Business Questionnaire”, students evaluate their own personal strengths and weaknesses related to self-employment, brainstorm possible future business ideas, choose one idea that matches their strengths and interests, and develop details for this “fantasy business.” In their “Mini-Business Summary”, they recap their project, analyze its successful and unsuccessful parts, and make evaluative statements about the class.

### **Evaluation/Follow-up**

In their written summaries and verbal discussion, most students reported that the class made it more likely that they would “try starting their own business in the future.” In most cases, this was true regardless of whether their own mini-business proved successful or not. For most students, the best parts of the class were the hands-on activities and field trips. Because of the visibility of advertising campaigns and sample products around the school, many other students became curious about the class, and informally the class seemed to have a positive reputation among WALC students. Although there were some complaints about written assignments, most students seemed to feel that there was a fair balance between academics and hands-on experience. Both staff members felt that the class was well worth continuing, and the fact that most loans were paid back created a “revolving fund” that can continue to fund mini-businesses in the future. At present, Coop Workshop is planned again as a mid-winter elective class. Suggestions from last year’s teachers included the following: (1) build on successful mini-business models from the first year, (2) perhaps offer more limited choices and/or require that work is done at school and not at home, (3) purchase basic equipment items to help with production (basic woodworking power tools, candle molds, or others), and (4) continue networking with area businesses to add to list of speakers or field trips.



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