



SFY 2018-19 Youth Support Services Opportunity Grant

Progress Report

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Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Employment and Training Programs Division

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Background

The Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$750,000 each year in State Fiscal Year(SFY) 2018 and 2019 for programs that focus on individuals from low-income communities and/or young adults (ages 14-24) from families with a history of intergenerational poverty and/or communities of color in [Laws of Minnesota 2017, Chapter 94, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3\(f\)](#). The Legislature permits the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to retain four percent of these funds for administration and monitoring making the total amount available for grants equal to \$720,000 per year.

DEED developed a Request For Proposals (RFP) for Support Services Competitive Grant funds; the notice of funding availability was published in the State Register and on DEED's Contract and Grant Opportunities section of DEED's website in early October 2017.

Eligible applicants were state or local government units, nonprofit organizations, community action agencies, business organizations or associations, and/or labor organizations.

Minimum Requirements

Services provided under this program must serve individuals from the eligible populations ("participants") in one or more of the following areas:

- Job training,
- Employment preparation,
- Internships,
- Job assistance to fathers,
- Financial literacy,
- Academic and behavioral interventions for low-performing students, and/or
- Youth intervention activities

Overview of the Request for Proposals Process

- The RFP was published in the State Register and on the [Contract and Grant Opportunities](#) section of DEED's website in early October 2017. Applications were due by 4:30 p.m. on November 22, 2017.
- The RFP directed potential applicants to submit any questions following the release of the RFP in writing via e-mail to a specified DEED staff contact person. All questions submitted in writing relating to the RFP were answered and published on DEED's website on a weekly basis.
- DEED's Employment and Training Programs Division hosted an Informational Webinar about the RFP on October 19, 2017. The Webinar was archived on DEED's website.

Criteria and Methodology for Selecting Grant Recipients

The RFP described the criteria against which proposals were evaluated. Proposals were rated on a 100-point scale covering the following areas: Executive Summary (10 points); Racial Equity Analysis (25 points); Proposed Services (35 points); Participant Recruitment, Intake and Retention Strategy (20 points); and Use of Funds (10

points). Up to fourteen additional bonus points were available in the following areas: Matching Funds (3 points); Sustainability (3 points); Partnerships (3 points); and Employment Outcomes (5 points). All applicants were also required to complete and submit a Fiscal Capacity Checklist.

All proposals were read and scored by a panel of community and state employee reviewers. All reviewers were required to maintain confidentiality during the review process (as per M.S. 13.599) and sign a conflict of interest disclosure form. All final funding decisions (including the amounts awarded) were made by the DEED Commissioner.

Methods and Procedures for Monitoring the Use of Grant Awards

Grant recipients follow standard DEED policies regarding the use of funds and reporting of expenditures on the grant, including the submission of monthly reports of all accrued expenditures during the grant period. Grantees were allowed to use up to ten percent of the grant funding for administrative costs, as stated in the RFP. The expenditure reports are reviewed and approved by the DEED program manager each month. DEED staff monitor all fiscal expenditures, planned vs. actual, including administrative expenditures each month. Financial reconciliation of grantee expenditures is conducted according to the Department of Administration Office of Grants Management policy.

Each grant is monitored on site by DEED during the grant period to ensure that the use of funds is consistent with the approved plan and contract and the intent of the Support Services Competitive Grant Program.

Methods for Measuring Outcomes and Accomplishments of Grant Recipients

DEED developed the reporting requirements for the Support Services Competitive Grantees to meet the requirements established in the legislation and to allow appropriate evaluation of the programs. Grantees submit participant data on a quarterly basis and fiscal reports on a monthly basis. DEED staff review all reports to ensure the expenditures and activities are in line with the agency's approved budget and work plan.

The grantees with adult-focused projects enter data into Workforce One, DEED's case management system, to track participants and report a variety of demographic and program activities. Adult-oriented grantees under this program are subject to the [Uniform Outcome Report Card](#) as specified under [Minnesota Statutes 116L.98](#). Grantees with youth-focused Support Services projects use their own method of tracking participant and outcome data due to the unique features of their program design serving youth participants. These grant recipients also report participant data and outcomes to DEED quarterly.

Selection of Grantees

One-hundred and seven (107) proposals were submitted to DEED in this funding cycle, totaling \$14.5 million in funding requests. Of the submitted proposals, 80% percent were urban focused and 20% were rural focused. All proposals were read and scored by community and state reviewers. The following 10 organizations were recommended for funding for youth focused projects:

| Organization | Area Served | SFY 2018 Grant Award | SFY 2019 Grant Award |
|--|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| Oromo Community of Minnesota | Twin Cities Metro | \$50,000 | \$50,000 |
| Minnesota Valley Action Council, Inc. | 25 county region of South Central and Southwest Minnesota | \$50,000 | \$50,000 |
| American Indian OIC | Twin Cities Metro | \$50,000 | \$50,000 |
| Jeremiah Program | Twin Cities Metro | \$50,000 | \$50,000 |
| 180 Degrees | Ramsey County | \$50,000 | \$50,000 |
| Brooklyn Park Economic Development Authority | Northwest Suburban Hennepin County | \$44,000 | \$44,000 |
| City of Minneapolis | City of Minneapolis | \$44,000 | \$44,000 |
| Workforce Development, Inc. | Goodhue and Wabasha Counties | \$44,000 | \$44,000 |
| Somali Community Resettlement Services | Faribault area | \$44,000 | \$44,000 |
| Hallie Q. Brown Community Center | City of St. Paul | \$44,000 | \$44,000 |
| | Total: | \$470,000 | \$470,000 |

Oromo Community of Minnesota, \$50,000 per year

Oromo Community of Minnesota provides employment assessment, employment readiness, placement and retention services to Oromo and other East African youth. The organization also offers academic support and career exploration services to Oromo youth including academic assessment, tutoring, mentoring, internships, enrollment in post-secondary programs, GED preparation; and wrap-around social services to support youth participants and their families.

Local contact: *Jemal Tufe*, jemal@oromomn.org

Minnesota Valley Action Council, \$50,000 per year

The project provides intensive services for SNAP Employment & Training low income individuals from communities of color and youth, especially young adults from families with a history of intergenerational poverty that leads to meaningful employment at family sustaining wages.

Local contacts: *Amanda Mackie and Diane Halvorson*, amanda@mvac.org and diane@workforcecouncil.org

American Indian OIC, \$50,000 per year

The project supports American Indians, people of color, people in low income homes, and those with significant barriers such as homelessness or criminal histories who need greater support to move forward on a career pathway.

Local contact: *Joe Hobot*, joeh@aioic.org

Jeremiah Program, \$50,000 per year

The project supports three key support services that eliminate barriers to post-secondary education for low-income single mothers: individualized career-track college and family coaching; empowerment classes; and life skills classes.

Local contact: *La Juana Whitmore*, lwhitmore@jeremiahprogram.org

180 Degrees, \$50,000 per year

The funds support job readiness training for youth; employment preparation including assistance in completing job applications and interviewing for youth; and manufacturing job training that leads to in-demand careers.

Local contact: *Dan Pfarr*, dan.pfarr@180degrees.org

Brooklyn Park Economic Development Authority, \$44,000 per year

The BrookLynk program helps ensure youth with barriers to employment are on a pathway to postsecondary and career success. The project also will deepen the engagement of employers to support work experiences, and enhance alumni services to facilitate connections to postsecondary academic and career opportunities.

Local contact: *Catrice O'Neal*, Catrice.ONeal@brooklynk.works

City of Minneapolis STEP-UP, \$44,000 per year

The funds support alignment of the STEP-UP work readiness training with Minneapolis Public Schools' Career Readiness Seminar to allow STEP-UP interns to earn high school credit for their work.

Local contact: *Deb Bahr-Helgen*, deb.bahr-helgen@minneapolismn.gov

Workforce Development Inc., \$44,000 per year

The project will prepare youth to be successful in adulthood through intensive mentoring, independent living skills training, work readiness training, work experience, and career pathways programming.

Local contact: *David LeGarde*, dlegarde@wdimn.org

[Somali Community Resettlement Services](#), \$44,000 per year

The project will provide support services that help youth attain a high school credential and employment experience.

Local contact: *Abdullah Hared*, anhared@somalcrs.org

[Hallie Q. Brown Community Center](#), \$44,000 per year

The project focus is to reduce youth crime by redirecting at-risk youth from criminal behavior and incarceration by providing responsive services and positive developmental supports.

Local contact: *Jonathan Palmer*, jpalmer@hallieqbrown.org

Outcomes

The SFY 2018-19 grants were awarded in early 2018. Outcomes achieved by the Youth Support Services grantees through September 30, 2019 include:

| Youth Program Measure | SFY 2018 and SFY 2019 Data |
|--|----------------------------|
| Number of participants served - group services | 2302 |
| Number of participants served – individual services | 6198 |
| Percentage of individual services participants that received education or job training activities* | 87% |

* Hallie Q. Brown Community Center is not included in this measure as their Support Services program does not provide these activities and instead provides outreach and referrals to participants.

Note: See Appendix A for Youth Support Services grant data.

DEED is working to address disparities and achieve economic equity for all Minnesotans by identifying and breaking down barriers to employment and business opportunities. Data on the populations served are valuable for program development and policy decisions. Data on participants served from communities of color, individuals and youth with disabilities, veterans, and women is as follows:

| Population Served in Youth Projects | SFY 2018 and SFY 2019 Data |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Communities of color | 92% |
| Youth with disabilities* | 7% |
| Public assistance recipients | 29% |
| Young women | 44% |

*Based on other characteristics of many of the youth served, the percentage of youth with disabilities is likely underreported.

Expenditures

Contracts for the SFY 2018-19 Support Services Grants were executed in early 2018. Expenditures reported through November 30, 2019 are in the following tables:

| Entity | SFY 2018 Allocation | SFY 2018 Expenditures | Percent of SFY 2018 Allocation Expended |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---|
| DEED Administration | \$30,000.00 | \$30,000.00 | 100% |
| Subgrantees (Youth) | \$470,000.00 | \$469,551.53 | 99.9% |
| Total | \$500,000.00 | \$499,551.53 | 99.9% |

| Entity | SFY 2019 Allocation | SFY 2019 Expenditures | Percent of SFY 2019 Allocation Expended |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---|
| DEED Administration | \$30,000.00 | \$30,000.00 | 100% |
| Subgrantees (Youth) | \$470,000.00 | \$443,552.10 | 94% |
| Total | \$500,000.00 | \$473,552.10 | 95% |

Success Stories

Roseline – Brooklyn Park Economic Development Authority

Roseline is a first-generation college student who interned for two summers at the North Hennepin Community College Financial Aid Office, coordinated through the BrookLynk program. During her internships, Roseline worked on a variety of projects and supported current and future students with their financial aid questions. Roseline also conducted research to enhance the college's financial literacy plan for students. Roseline credits her internship and supervisor with preparing her with key job and life skills that have helped throughout her journey as she graduated high school and entered college. Through a partnership between North Hennepin Community College and BrookLynk, Roseline is one of 16 freshmen at the college who were awarded a scholarship because of their participation in BrookLynk. Currently, she is studying clinical psychology, while also interning at the college's financial aid office and serving as a voting-member of the BrookLynk Advisory Board.

Feruza – Oromo Community of Minnesota

Feruza, age 29, is a new immigrant from Ethiopia to Minnesota. She does not have close or immediate family in Minnesota. Like many other immigrants from East Africa, Ms. Feruza came to the Oromo Community of Minnesota (OCM) where staff welcomed and assisted her in finding public assistance including health insurance, school, housing and job search resources. OCM staff helped her apply for a career in several companies. She came to the OCM office consistently for four weeks and finally, she found a job and temporary housing.

Currently, she works at the Subway restaurant in Minneapolis. Feruza has said, “I didn’t know the Oromo Community of Minnesota helps people this much. I met many other immigrants who are in the same boat. I am glad I have dared to go and visit OCM. They help me find a job and some other resources. These are a people to whom I belong.” She invoked and spoke from her heart. OCM continues to serve Feruza. In Ethiopia she was a college graduate and counseled to continue her education. Consequently, the OCM youth outreach employee is working with her to start her education soon in her new country.

M.B. – Oromo Community of Minnesota

M.B. graduated from community college last year with an Associate Degree in accounting. He has been struggling to find the right job. We have worked with him to identify his job interest, skill, and experience. Then we have checked his resume out. After we worked on his resume, he applied to three different job openings. A few days later, he told us that he got a phone call for a job interview. We followed up with this good news and asked him how the interview went. He responds, “I am pleased to tell you this, I have found a job that I want to do at the company I dream to be a part of.” He also added, “Thank you for your assistance and I will recommend some other people who are struggling to find a job.” Indeed, we also are pleased to be hearing this kind of testimony.

Key Rose – Minneapolis Employment and Training

When Key Rose was 14, her family faced medical challenges that led to financial uncertainty. Since then, she had wanted to know how she could work. After moving to Minnesota, she was informed about opportunities with STEP UP that allow youth to start paid internships at her age. She didn’t hesitate to sign up and has been an extraordinary intern for 4 years in a row. She was also one of 8 youth who made it past the rigorous application process that qualified for the Silicon NorthStars, which is a week-long tech camp in Silicon Valley whose mission is to inspire and educate young Minnesotans to become future leaders in technology. Key Rose said that it was “one of the best experiences of my life!” She’s still motivated by that trip and finds inspiration and drive with everyday goals.

During her time with STEP UP, she has held an internship for two years at Pillsbury House Theater working with the summer day camp where she had the ability to “grow with families”, and then at the City of Minneapolis Health Department where she became “motivated to work for civil rights of people of color” and “inspired to work in different areas leading up to becoming a neurosurgeon.” Key Rose’s exposure to public health issues has opened her up to seeing how her future and present goals intersect.

STEP UP has “shaped me as a strong young woman of color and having the experience helped with access to the job I have now,” which is a dietary aid at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. Her STEP-UP experience has helped her feel motivated to do new things and take different paths to get there.

Dino – Minnesota Valley Action Council

Dino came to MN Valley Action Council as a SNAP Employment & Training participant. He had recently moved to the area after his father passed away and was homeless. Dino has a criminal background and spent some time in prison. Dino was seeking job search assistance and needed some additional resources. In order to meet his needs, he was co-enrolled in the Support Service Competitive Grant as resources under SNAP E&T are very limited. Dino worked with MN Valley Action Council staff and they assisted him with getting interview clothes. Dino was hired for a full-time position at a local manufacturing business and is making \$16 per hour and he also works part-time at a local restaurant to pick up extra work on the weekends. Dino worked on budgeting with MN Valley Action Council and was able to find housing and will be moving into his own apartment.

Danielle – Minnesota Valley Action Council

Danielle was referred to MVAC by the Waseca Alternative Learning Center for the MVAC Young Adult Career Development Program. Through this program, her vocational advisor assisted her with getting her connected to the SNAP program. She shared that “Before I heard of MVAC I was unsure of my future and career path I was going to take. I met with the wonderful people that worked there and we discussed details about going for my CNA.” Danielle was a full-time high school student and became a voluntary referral for SNAP E&T and started working with another vocational advisor at MVAC. She was later enrolled in the SNAP Equity Program and Support Services Competitive Grant. Danielle graduated high school and completed an online CNA training course with the assistance of these programs. Danielle shared that “throughout all of this MVAC helped me out financially by paying for my class, and gas to travel to and from school. They also paid for my expenses of scrubs.” Danielle passed her CNA test and is currently working fulltime hours at the Janesville Nursing Home as a CNA making \$12/hr.

Kalley – Workforce Development, Inc.

Kalley was referred to the Emerging Leaders program by her youth worker. She completed an Independent Living Skills program with WDI partner organization Red Wing Youth Outreach. She went on a leadership and self-growth program to the Boundary Waters trip as well, through WDI’s partnership with Big City Mountaineers. She resides with a family that she met from school, as living at home is not currently a healthy environment for her. Kalley completed the WDI summer Work Readiness program, which has helped her to obtain employment that she really enjoys. This program has also assisted her in career exploration. She is currently three credits from graduating. Her youth worker is taking her on college tours so that Kalley can finalize her career choice. She is excited about going to college and finding a career she loves.

Appendix A: Youth Support Services Data Summary

Table 1: Activities and Services Provided by Grantees

| Organization | Job Training | Employment Prep | Internships | Job Assistance to Fathers | Financial Literacy | Academic and Behavioral Interventions for Low Performing Students | Youth Intervention Activities |
|--|--------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Somali Community Resettlement Services | x | x | | | x | x | x |
| Brooklyn Park Economic Development Authority | | x | x | | | x | |
| Oromo Community of Minnesota | x | x | x | | | x | x |
| American Indian OIC | x | x | | x | | x | x |
| Jeremiah Program | | x | | | | x | |
| Hallie Q. Brown Community Center | | | | | | | x |
| Workforce Development, Inc | x | x | | | x | | x |
| Minnesota Valley Action Council | | x | | | | | |
| 180 Degrees | x | x | | | | x | x |
| City of Minneapolis, STEP-UP | x | x | x | | | x | |
| TOTAL | 6 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 6 |

Table 2: Individuals Served by Grantees

| Organization | Total Served - Individuals Services | Total Served - Group Services* |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Somali Community Resettlement Services | 30 | 30 |
| Brooklyn Park Economic Development Authority | 479 | 581 |
| Oromo Community of Minnesota | 342 | n/a |
| American Indian OIC | 53 | n/a |
| Jeremiah Program | 221 | n/a |
| Hallie Q. Brown Community Center | 3275 | n/a |
| Workforce Development, Inc | 28 | 50 |
| Minnesota Valley Action Council | 118 | n/a |
| 180 Degrees | 11 | n/a |
| City of Minneapolis, STEP-UP | 1641 | 1641 |
| TOTAL | 6198 | 2302 |

* Some program models included providing group services, in addition to individual services.

Table 3: Grantee Outcomes

| |
|---|
| Somali Community Resettlement Services |
| 100% of participants were from communities of color and nearly two-thirds had limited English proficiency |
| 43% of participants had dropped-out of school and they were connected to ABE services |
| 63% of those participants obtained a high school diploma or GED and 23% of them completed at least one GED course |
| Brooklyn Park Economic Development Authority |
| 100% of participants received education and job training services |
| 110 youth were placed in summer internships |
| 93% completed their summer internship with 92% rating their experience excellent or very good |
| Oromo Community of Minnesota |
| 100% of participants are from communities of color |
| Over 35% of participants had limited English proficiency |
| 93% of participants rated their experience excellent or very good |
| American Indian OIC |
| 49% of participants were youth or adult offenders with 75% not employed at program enrollment |
| 83% received education, job training services, and career guidance services |
| 100% entered post-secondary, vocational/occupational skills training, apprenticeship, military, job search, or employment |
| Jeremiah Program |
| All participants were pregnant or parenting women receiving, or from families receiving, public assistance |
| 100% of participants received education and job training services |
| 100% received academic credit or service-learning credit and attained work readiness or education goals |
| Hallie Q. Brown Community Center |
| 97% of participants are from communities of color |
| Engaged and/or referred 3275 high risk youth to community partners for programming and services |
| Services include, work-readiness training, life-skills building, educational support and other services |
| Workforce Development, Inc |
| 71% of participants identified as having a disability and 29% were youth offenders |
| 100% of participants received education and job training services |
| 100% of participants received mentoring activities and community involvement and leadership development activities |
| Minnesota Valley Action Council |
| 100% of participants receive, or are from families receiving, public assistance |
| 30% of participants were youth or adult offenders and 30% were homeless or runaway youth |
| 65 individuals were placed in full-time or part-time employment and 42 received employment-retention services |
| 180 Degrees |
| 100% of participants receive, or are from families receiving, public assistance |
| 100% of participants received education and job training services including completing an 80-hour manufacturing class |
| 100% entered post-secondary, vocational/occupational skills training, apprenticeship, military, job search, or employment |
| City of Minneapolis, STEP-UP |
| 100% of youth participated in work experience activities |
| 100% of youth participated in post-secondary exploration, career guidance and planning activities |
| Over 1000 youth received academic or service-learning credit from their summer internship |