

MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM

SFY2020 ANNUAL REPORT



This 2020 Annual Report provides an overview of youth employment and training activities funded under the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) in SFY2020.


CareerForce[™]

Minnesota's Career Resource

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WHO IS SERVED UNDER MYP?

2,934 youth were served through the work experience component of MYP and an additional 23,896 youth were served through the Outreach to Schools/Career Advisor component of MYP: 54% are youth of color, 46% are youth with disabilities and 66% are youth from families on public assistance. Customers are at-risk and low-income youth ages 14 to 24 who lack academic and “applied skills” considered critical for current and future workplace needs MYP meets the needs of youth who are hands-on, applied learners. MYP provides safe and healthy worksites and sets high expectations for growth and learning. Detailed information on youth served under MYP in SFY2020 and outcomes are included in charts at the end of this report.

For data on individualized case managed work experience, [see page 40](#).

HOW DOES MYP PREPARE YOUTH FOR THE WORKFORCE?

Comprehensive services include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Early Assessment: Skill assessment and interest determinations individualize the service, assist in career development. | Employer Engagement: Employers evaluate work readiness skills of youth in pre and post assessments on the worksite. |
| Work-Based Learning: Job opportunities in public and private sectors introduce youth to career pathways. | Support Services: Transportation, clothing, tools, child care, housing/rental assistance, and school-related expenses are available to support participants in work experience. |
| Mentoring: Builds workplace skills, career awareness and confidence. | Credentials/Academic Credit: Youth can earn academic credit, service learning credit or industry-recognized credentials, degrees and certificates. |
| Financial Literacy: Budgeting and independent living skills developed. | |
| Leadership Skills: Opportunity to work with diverse groups and engage in community service. | |

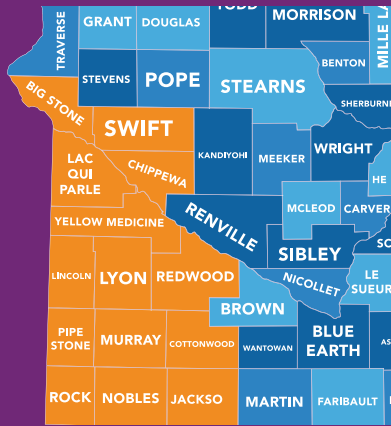
WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY ABOUT WORK EXPERIENCE FOR TEENS?

Research has shown that the number one predictor of future success in the workforce is early exposure to work experience:

- Contextual learning improves student’s grades, attendance and graduation rates
- Young people who have an opportunity to gain work experience as teens are more likely to stay in school, avoid criminal involvement, gang behavior, drugs and unwanted pregnancies
- Teen employment contributes to significantly higher wages as young adults enter their twenties
- Teens in low-income families have the least access to jobs – especially jobs that combine part-time work and school

WHAT IS THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) FOR THE MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM (MYP)?

Each state dollar invested in MYP yielded a return on investment of \$8.26 for SFY2020, [see page 42](#).



Southwest Minnesota

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC)

Eriann Faris, Youth Program Manager

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Phone: 507-476-4053

swmnpic.org

Counties served: Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Swift, and Yellow Medicine.

OVERVIEW

The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC) works to build tomorrow's workforce through partnerships with a shared focus on training and leadership. We are a private, nonprofit organization that offers customized training and employment services for individuals and businesses in a 14-county area of Southwest Minnesota. We facilitate services through three CareerForce locations in Marshall, Montevideo and Worthington. For 35 years, the PIC has helped build a skilled and qualified workforce.

Our youth and young adult division works with employers and educators to assist students and their families with career exploration, career preparation, and skills training that align with the needs of local employers. Providing youth and young adults with opportunities to experience "real-life" workplaces and employees outside of training is important for their career preparation and for building a pipeline of future skilled workers in Southwest Minnesota. Services include: career awareness and exploration activities, career preparation, career pathways training, post-secondary scholarships, transition and career advisory services, work-based learning opportunities, and support services.

PIC leverages other resources, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Minnesota Youth Workforce Development Competitive Grant Program (Youth at Work), Youth Intervention Funds, the Disability Employment Initiative Funds, Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS/VRS), Higher Education Career Advisory Project Funds (HECAP), and local funding from foundations, partners, and counties to complement and maximize services for youth. Co-enrolling individuals allows for efficiencies with financial resources and expanded services for participants.

SERVING YOUTH UNDER-REPRESENTED IN THE WORKFORCE

Tokatakiya wodakota yuha maunnipi kte ye/do, which means, "We will walk towards the future with the Dakota way of life", is a creative and collaborative initiative where the SW MN Private Industry Council (PIC) and the Lower Sioux Indian Community provides 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students training covering job seeking, applications, and interviewing. Participants are

selected to participate in a seven-week summer youth work program organized by Lower Sioux Indian Community and Dakota Wicohan. In addition, to developing employment skills, the young workers are studying Dakota language and lifeways.

The students are coached and guided on how to fill out a job application and complete an interview to participate in the summer work program. PIC youth staff provided feedback to each of the students on their final application and interview. To further build the youth's employment skills, the PIC facilitated a second presentation to the Dakota youth workers on various career clusters that are high demand, high pay industries in southwest MN. In addition, PIC staff introduced a variety of tools for the students to use such as job exploration videos, labor market information, and financial literacy.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

As a school-to-career intermediary organization, the PIC serves as a single point of contact for employers and schools, providing a sequential, purposeful continuum of Career Awareness, Career Exploration and Career Preparation and Skills Training activities. The opportunities are designed to increase knowledge of career opportunities, develop marketable experiences and skills, and build social capital across the region that leads to higher wages and lower student debt while developing an essential talent pipeline for local employers. A primary focus is on expanding Learn and Earn training models so all students have opportunities to gain the advanced skills needed that lead to higher wages. All students (ages 14-24) in the 14 county region will have the potential to benefit with targeted services to youth of color and youth with disabilities. The impact of the project is to decrease employment disparities by advancing wages of the youth, prepare students for career decisions and employment, engage employers with local students, expand work-based learning opportunities, and develop an essential talent pipeline for employers.

BEST PRACTICES/"KNOW BEFORE YOU GO" LABOR MARKET INFOGRAPHICS

Providing labor market information to students, parents and school counselors to create awareness of regional career opportunities in high-growth, in-demand occupations is



critical. WIOA Region 5 has developed and distributes labor market infographics that are easy to understand and are shared through innovative and traditional avenues such as school newsletters, websites, career advisors, curriculum, sports rosters and social media posts. We have partnered with schools, collaboratives, rural development commissions, and more as part of the dissemination process. The launch of the labor market campaign “Know Before You Go” provides infographics on median wage range by education level, annual tuition increases, cost of a degree, and in-demand jobs in the region. **BRAND NEW** is these are now available in two languages: Spanish and English.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS/CAREER ADVISOR COMPONENT

Outreach to Schools (OTS) services (including HECAP and Pre-ETS) are a partnership between the Workforce Development Area 6 Board, (WDB) – SW MN Youth Committee and local educational agencies. OTS addresses a strategy for delivering effective education planning, career counseling and labor market information to the region’s youth and families. The need to provide career services in the region’s school districts is critical. With local employers not able to expand their businesses due to a skilled labor shortage, and small rural schools having very limited, if any, staff time dedicated to student career development. It is essential all students graduate and know their path to in-demand occupations.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

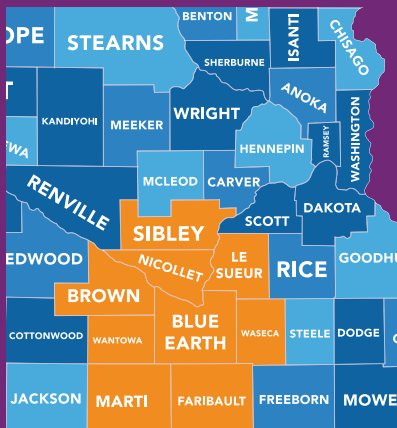
- “During my work experience I got to work with great people, learned responsibility, and made money.”
– PARTICIPANT
- “Participation in this program gave our student the opportunity to learn and practice skills that will enable them to be successful in the work environment. Understanding what employers are expecting of them is crucial to their success.”
– EMPLOYER
- “Our youth worker learned many skills during the year that are essential in the work setting, such as timeliness, quality of work produced, profit margin, importance of staying on task, following directives, and the importance of communication.” – EMPLOYER
- “I learned valuable communication skills with the work experience with lots of different kinds of people who hold various positions in a nursing home setting and with residents.” – PARTICIPANT

SUCCESS STORY: Kattey

Kattey was a senior in high school while working at Sterling Pharmacy as a clerk. She had always hoped to be able to further her education. Her career goal is to become a Pharmacist. Kattey learned of our career pathway trainings and inquired about course offerings. Kattey learned about the Pharmacy Technician Certificate through her Youth



Employment Specialist at Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council Inc. (PIC). She could begin classes while still attending high school and continuing her part-time job at Sterling Pharmacy. Kattey started with Medical Terminology, and was able to obtain extra support and wrap around services. Medical Terminology is a rigorous course. The integrated supports allowed Kattey to be successful in all areas of her life, not just the training. Kattey successfully passed Medical Terminology and moved directly into Pharmacy Principles and Practice. These courses were held online with integrated wraparound services and supports. Kattey successfully completed Pharmacy Principles and Practice and then began her externship at Sterling Pharmacy to obtain her Pharmacy Technician Certificate. Kattey completed 144 hours of related occupational skills training for her externship, and is officially a Pharmacy Technician at Sterling Pharmacy. Kattey also graduated from high school about the same time she obtained her Pharmacy Technician Certificate. She is employed with Sterling Pharmacy as a Pharmacy Technician, making \$2.85 more an hour with additional hours.



South Central Minnesota

South Central Workforce Council/ Minnesota Valley Action Council

Diane Halvorson, Executive Director

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Phone: (507) 345-2408

workforcecouncil.org

Counties Served: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan

OVERVIEW

MVAC provides comprehensive services that prepare youth for the world of work including: career exploration/planning, labor market information on demand occupations, job seeking and keeping skills, financial literacy and work experience opportunities. Based on assessment results, youth are placed in worksites that fit their career interests and whenever possible at private sector sites where there is a greater opportunity for youth to get hired. Financial fitness training requires youth to open a savings account to direct deposit the paycheck and workshops teach them about money management, saving money and building assets.

South Central leveraged additional funding to complement and maximize services to target populations including youth from communities of color, youth transitioning out of the foster care system, youth with disabilities, teen parents and youth in public assistance households as well as career services to high school students. Funding sources include Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Youth At Work Competitive Grant, Youth Intervention Program Grant, TANF Youth Grant, Pre-Employment Transition Services funding through Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Higher Education Career Advisor Project Grant and funding from local partners to support career exploration events.

BEST PRACTICES/SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

The “Dream It. Believe It. Achieve It.” Program funded by the Youth At Work Competitive Grant targets services to youth from communities of color. With input from youth participants, parents and representatives from agencies that serve communities of color, key strategies have been successful in reaching youth from communities of color. Because we recognize the strong family connection in communities of color, parents are invited to participate in the initial meetings for program enrollment as well as the group activities. To increase cultural awareness in the community, worksite supervisors participate in cultural awareness training. The program provides positive role models from communities of color that have overcome adversity to demonstrate that it is possible to achieve their dreams. This program was recognized as a best practice by the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards.

BEST PRACTICES/OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

Partners In Career Exploration (PICE) is a partnership between workforce development and education that places interns in local rural schools districts to provide one-on-one career exploration and career counseling assistance to high school students.

The interns are first year graduate students in the Student Counseling Program at Minnesota State University-Mankato. Prior to placing the interns at area high schools, they received training from CareerForce location partner agencies and our local labor market analyst who provides them with information on our labor market including high growth/demand occupations in the region.

The intern meets with every high school junior and senior enabling them to reach students that are not proactive about their plans after high school and would otherwise go unnoticed and fall through the cracks. The interns also provide career exploration activities for younger grade levels so that they can begin to consider their plans after high school. This program was recognized as a best practice by the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards.

Area high school students participated in a variety of hands on career exploration events featuring demand occupations in key industries in our area. Over 900 students from 38 area high schools participated in the Tour of Manufacturing where local manufacturers opened their doors for tours and provided information on career opportunities at their business. About 700 students from 25 area high schools attended the Construct Tomorrow event which is an interactive career fair that provides hands on experiences in each of the construction trades to expose students to union apprenticeship opportunities. New this year, we extended our hours and opened the event to the public. We hosted “Trades After Hours” for job seekers, students and parents to explore careers in the construction trades. About 70 individuals attended the event including job seekers, career changers, and students that were not able to attend the event during the day that came with their parents. Fifty-five students participated in a three-day SCRUBS Camp which offered an opportunity for students to explore health science professions through hands on activities. This event was featured in a documentary titled “Ready for the Future: Career Preparation

in Rural Communities” www.tpt.org/ready-for-the-future/. The documentary was a partnership between Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest at the American Institutes for Research and Twin Cities PBS.

South Central and Southwest Minnesota identified a great need to provide labor market information to students, parents and school counselors to create awareness of career opportunities in high-growth, in-demand occupations. The launch of the labor market campaign “Know Before You Go” shared infographics on education and wage range by education level, annual tuition increases, cost of a degree, and demand jobs in the region. We launched industry specific infographics for healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, agriculture, transportation, construction, business and education. The infographics feature a variety of occupations in each industry and compare education, important qualities, job description, employment opportunities, work environment and career paths at every education level. The infographics are also available in Spanish.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

- Local School Districts
- Minnesota State University-Mankato
 - ▶ Education Talent Search
 - ▶ Student Counseling Department
- South Central College
 - ▶ Financial Aid Outreach
 - ▶ Secondary Relations
- South Central Service Cooperative
- CareerForce Location Partnering Agencies
 - ▶ Job Service
 - ▶ Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - ▶ Minnesota Valley Action Council
 - ▶ Regional Labor Market Analyst

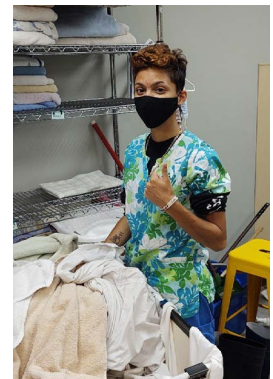
CUSTOMER COMMENTS

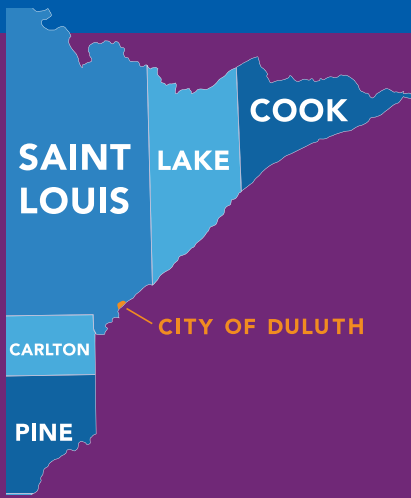
- “I’m my father’s PCA but no one else will hire me too. You guys have given me a chance to get out of the house to work more. I learned I would much rather work in something other than medical care.”
– *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “I have raised my grandson for the last 8 months and I feel this summer was crucial for his mental health and ability to heal. You could not have helped him find a better worksite. It was the perfect fit & the staff made him feel right at home, what a great first experience for him. Thank you is not enough!”
– *PARTICIPANT’S GRANDMOTHER*

- “This program launched my son’s career several years ago and now I want to give back to others by being a worksite. I am sold on this program.”
– *WORKSITE SUPERVISOR*
- “We recently learned about being a worksite with MVAC and started with the most amazing young lady in June and just hired her ourselves. This is a great way to find and train potential employees before hiring them – we cannot believe our luck in this win-win!”
– *WORKSITE SUPERVISOR*

SUCCESS STORY: Lael

Lael is a 18-year-old High School student who came to us without any actual real-life work experience. She attended MVAC’s Work Readiness Class in attempts to create a foundation to build upon. We noticed that Lael was very shy and reserved – hardly making any eye contact with any of her peers. Staff took the time to listen to what she was interested in and seemed to find a perfect worksite for her to begin at, the Blue Earth County Humane Society (BENCHS). Lael stated that she likes to work with animals and prefers to not be around many people. We got Lael started at BENCHS in early July and we began to see the transformation of Lael. After a few weeks, staff did a worksite visit to see how she had progress. Lael knew where everything was at, what all her responsibilities were, and even provided a guided tour to the staff member. She showed good energy and competence as if she had worked there for years. Lael fit right in. Her mother Krista had this to say: “Lael has done exceptionally well with the program so far. Her confidence has improved, she’s been more assertive, and she has developed a healthy relationship with her supervisor. She feels comfortable at BENCHS and thinks of work as a ‘safe place’. This program through MVAC has been life changing for Lael.” Andrew Burk, BENCHS Executive Director had this to say about Lael: “When Lael first started, she was very quiet and reserved. Part of the culture we build at BENCHS is that every voice matters. We’re a small nonprofit of about 15 staff and I check in with every staff everyday when I get in and leave. I talk with Lael every time she works to ensure that she knows that she’s a part of our team. Lael’s listening and communication skills have dramatically improved. She has gotten to the point where she will even joke around with the other staff. There have been some teachable moments along the way and Lael worked through her mistakes. She is continuously improving through the work experience!”





City of Duluth

Duluth Workforce Development

Elena Foshay, Director

402 West 1st Street, Duluth, MN 55802

Phone: (218) 730-5241

Area served: City of Duluth

OVERVIEW

Duluth Workforce Development provides services to In-school and Out-of-school youth through the YES Duluth program. YES Duluth serves youth and young adults who experience barriers to achieving their goals in employment and/or education through a wide array of employment and education support services. YES Duluth's program elements include career pathways assessment and education, work readiness training, soft skills training, work experience, job skills training, financial literacy training, and other program elements as appropriate to the individual.

Support and guidance for individuals working toward their GED, high school diploma, post-secondary education and short-term training is available to participants. CareerForce in Duluth partners with Adult Basic Education (ABE) to provide tutoring support to help participants with study skill development, basic skills training, and GED preparation.

YES Duluth works in close partnership with area youth providers and strengthening our referral network has proven to better reach and better serve our at-risk youth and young adults. In addition, we leverage resources through co-enrollment in grants and programs whenever necessary to best meet our participants' service needs.

BEST PRACTICES

As a best practice, YES Duluth works in close partnership with youth serving agencies throughout our community to ensure access to the program elements necessary for support in achieving individualized education and employment goals. Through the Opportunity Youth of Duluth collaboration, we leverage the strengths and resources provided through our partner agencies to make connections, provide stability, connect with resources and pave the way for individual skill building as youth begin their career path.

YES Duluth counselors work one-on-one with youth to assist in the development of their individual employment and education plan. In the early stages of enrollment, we incorporate guidance and counseling in career planning, job seeking, confidence and self-management, handling conflict and employability skills. YES Duluth counselors are currently utilizing activities and assessments from Career EdVentures, Skills to Pay the Bills,

Holland Career Interest Surveys and the Careerwise Education resource as tools for individuals to identify personal strengths, explore possible career pathways and plan for obtaining stackable credentials in post-secondary education. We are also integrating an online work readiness assessment and training program into our available resources.

Using DEED data tools and CAREERwise Education statistics, YES Duluth staff maintain an "LMI Snapshot" which is distributed to youth participants. The Snapshot illustrates current and local LMI data including growing careers, jobs with the most openings in the area and LMI "fun facts." Presenting this information to youth initiates discussions and informs decision making regarding how the youth's goals and interests fit into our region's current labor market picture.

To develop our participants' skills in financial literacy, we provide a variety of training opportunities and support to youth based on the age, experience and needs of the individual youth. Financial literacy toolkits YES Duluth staff utilize include CFPB's Your Money, Your Goals toolkit and NEFE's High School Financial Planning Program. In-school youth can receive Managing Credit Education in partnership with local financial institutions. We also continue to maintain outreach and referrals with community partners that teach financial literacy, including ABE, Community Action Duluth (CAD), and Lutheran Social Services (LSS).

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Duluth Workforce Development's YES Duluth program maintains a strong referral network that effectively refers and connects youth with the program. This core network includes local youth-serving organizations such as ISD 709 Counselors, Life House, Dept. of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, SOAR Career Solutions, YWCA, Valley Youth Center, The Hills Neighborhood Youth Services (NYS), and Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Counselors. YES Duluth staff meet regularly with area partners to effectively refer youth to appropriate services and to communicate regarding eligibility, program elements, support services and incentives to aid in outreach.

YES Duluth staff continually diversify and engage our pool of employers that provide work experiences to our youth



participants. When establishing relationships with local businesses, we strive for a balance of LMI based employer connections and person-centered employment options. To better serve our youth and our community, YES Duluth is currently working with our local workforce board's Emerging Workforce Committee to expand our employer base and to explore new options to facilitate engagement between youth and community employers.

YES Duluth utilizes Minnesota Youth Program funding to leverage and enhance services offered through WIOA Title I Youth and MFIP, among others. Youth are co-enrolled in multiple grants whenever possible.

SERVING YOUTH UNDER-REPRESENTED IN THE WORKFORCE

YES Duluth staff are continually building relationships and extending into the community in partnership with area organizations to connect with youth in greatest need of support. Current connections and projects are forming with Men as Peacemakers, MN Teen Challenge, Arrowhead Juvenile Corrections Center, CAD, The Human Development Center, Safe Haven Shelter and Resource Center, LSS, and the Family in Transition Program with ISD 709.

The Opportunity Youth of Duluth is a collaboration between YES Duluth, SOAR Career Solutions, Life House, The Hills, and ABE to provide the strongest possible support system to the hardest-to-serve youth. This initiative gives under-served and under-represented youth an opportunity to fulfill areas of need including housing, employment and education, mental health services and chemical dependency treatment.

There are multiple planned events throughout the year where YES Duluth collaborates with partners to engage a diverse group of young people, including youth of color and those with disabilities. Events include Construct Tomorrow, Northland Career Fair, Pathways to Careers, NERCC Transition Fair, and mock interview events with ISD 709, leading individuals to success in obtaining scholarships and employment.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

YES Duluth staff are embedded at the Career Centers located at the East and Denfeld High Schools, and at Harbor City International Charter. One key priority of this effort is to engage with and serve minority populations and students with disabilities. To reach more students of color and augment partnership with the Career Centers, YES Duluth staff are strengthening relationships with school integration specialists, truancy action program staff, Check and Connect staff and the Special Education departments. Activities complement the work of school guidance counselors and part-time career center staff and provide greater opportunities for students to:

- Identify and explore areas of career interest;
- Gain exposure to different occupations through tours and other opportunities;

- Gain work experience and internship opportunities that help prepare students for future work;
- Receive individualized assistance with development of a plan that puts them on track for success in work and life.

Embedded job counselors work to engage with in-school youth as they move into out-of-school status. At that juncture we strive to engage youth in education, employment and other program elements before they disconnect from the school system.

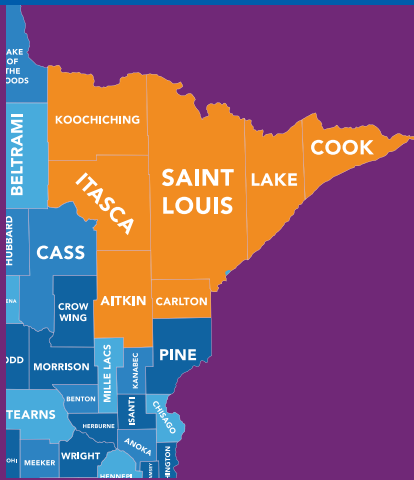
YES Duluth has collaborated with the Denfeld Full Service Community School to serve more students and families at a deeper level. YES Duluth is able to engage families in conversations about scholarships, financial aid, post-secondary training, and overall services offered through CareerForce and the community at large.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “The best part of my experience: Always having someone willing to help.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “I loved the program and will refer others.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “Great place. Great people.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “I’m super glad to be back working with our youth participant and YES Duluth! Thanks!” – *WORKSITE SUPERVISOR*

SUCCESS STORY: Mackenzie

Mackenzie came to our program needing a work experience and help attaining her GED. She also needed to find permanent housing as she was staying in a temporary shelter. She has come a long way in the past 8 months. The YES Duluth program was able to provide her with a paid work experience at Life House with Legitimate Hustle, their candle making and retail business. She worked on and attained her GED. Then, when the pandemic and shutdown started, the program had to pause her work experience, but Mackenzie continued to move forward. She started a job at a nursing home where they were willing to train her in as a Certified Nursing Assistant, and pay for her college education, which she started in pursuit of her goal to become a nurse. In addition, she is no longer homeless and has her own apartment. Mackenzie says that when she first came to us she had felt hopeless and depressed, but now she has a sense of stability and feels so much better about her life. Great job Mackenzie!



Northeast Minnesota

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (NEMOJT)

Marie Domiano, Executive Director

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Phone: (218) 748-2200

nemojt.org

Area served: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis (except City of Duluth)

OVERVIEW

Northeast Career EdVenture is the Outreach to Schools (OTS) service to provide free career planning and guidance services to local school districts using the expertise that resides in the local CareerForce system and the partnerships our system has developed over the years. Some districts have robust career planning resources to guide students and many, if not most, have very little to offer students for career planning. Career EdVenture offers a standardized menu of services from which any school district in our region can select resources needed for their students. With the advent of COVID-19 WDA-3/ Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (NEMOJT) has adapted quickly and efficiently to accommodate new learning environments and challenges.

Services are divided into two categories: services for individuals (one-on-one career guidance, career assessment, postsecondary planning, resume development, personalized job search strategy, and transitioning from high school) and services for groups/classes (Navigating Business Culture, Financial Literacy, business and industry speakers and tours, postsecondary planning, career interest and values assessments, and games and activities with career exploration themes, and more).

Coordinating MYP OTS, WIOA Youth programming and VRS Pre-ETS is a comprehensive effort by NEMOJT to reach all students in a school district often with blended activities from various resources, when appropriate with those from such Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) Pre-employment and Training (Pre-ETS) programming. An integration of service delivery allows NEMOJT staff to be able to serve virtually any students and parents in a school district regardless of their needs and abilities. The coordination of services across the broad spectrum of a student population as an OTS activity builds enrollments for established WIOA & MYP programming while providing similar Career EdVenture OTS information at a pace structure that is mindful of accommodating all student's needs.

All services are geared to help students understand the opportunities available to them in the world of work. For example, our postsecondary planning workshop addresses how to identify programs that lead to jobs in high demand careers using various research approaches that include labor market information on high-demand, high-pay jobs,

and career pathways. When asked to provide business and industry speakers for classrooms, representatives from high demand industries are sought to provide insight into career opportunities from a local perspective. Financial literacy workshops are offered in partnership with the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency by referral to our youth CareerForce sites and as a component of Career EdVenture curriculum. Over time NEMOJT has identified not only is financial planning necessary to understand what constitutes a living wage and viable future career, it can set into motion a process of financial planning for post-secondary to minimize or eliminate student debt.

We have developed numerous resources that help students identify and explore high growth industries and in-demand occupations, including a 2-part Career Exploration series that covers making the connection between assessment results and labor market information, discusses what is really a livable wage, what success in the 'new economy' looks like, and how to explore corresponding training programs. Additionally, we have created several worksheets to engage students in understanding high-demand, high-wage occupations. Beyond providing just career resources NEMOJT staff teach self-advocacy skills helping youth to gain a voice to speak up for themselves, aid in their decision-making process, understanding their rights and identifying how and where to go to get and receive help.

NEMOJT youth counselors' market this menu to school personnel who then select the services best suited to their student population. The Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) is a tool used to assess the effectiveness of our youth programming. Adding to NEMOJT counselor expertise and expanding the awareness of Career EdVenture/MYP OTS, CareerForce partners convened a joint professional development day on November 1st 2019 to inform partners of service and to provide additional training with the theme of "Why Diversity Matters." Ongoing work individualized work for addressing disparities and diversity is being done by NEMOJT counselors from the Intercultural Development Inventory to help them to better engage the changing demographics of northeast Minnesota.



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

NEMOJT counselors continue to have an on-campus presence at most regional technical and community colleges. NEMOJT staff can be found at Fon-du-Lac TCC, Mesabi Range TCC, Rainy River Community College, Hibbing Technical College, Lake Superior College, and Itasca Community College. Local high school students gain the benefits of NEMOJT staff housed on local campuses to provide a bridge from secondary to post-secondary education with the most up to date information on careers, programming, and access to resources. Aligning services with DWP/MFIP participants, also an area of NEMOJT programming is providing opportunities to engage those most in need. A multi-disciplinary approach to youth services that has brought staff from other community-based organizations to the CareerForce sites and provided recruitment opportunities and services to youth.

Career EdVenture included several events that engaged larger groups throughout northeast Minnesota and had planned to again until the COVID-19 shut-down. The overarching goal is to inform about careers in high demand and high pay careers, especially in the crafts and trades. The region has a projected shortfall of workers entering the trades and a high demand due to numerous regional construction projects expected to occur well into the next decade. On a larger scale NEMOJT is integral part in the delivery of 218-Trades information designed to assist students and parents to career in the crafts and trades. The Iron Range Construct Tomorrow is an ongoing event in Eveleth, MN. Construct Tomorrow is a hands-on event for high school students to introduce them to the skilled trades in tandem with the NEMOJT regional initiative 218-Trades. More than 300 students from regional high schools attended the Apprenticeships Fair. Participants included 14 different trade unions along with technical schools from the region. Each year over 400 students from 18 high schools and learning centers attended. Chart Your Future in Carlton County, MN brought more than a dozen regional business to the meet with students and provide mock interviews to most of the graduating seniors from the Carlton High School. A Disability Mentor Day was convened for students at Fon-du-Lac Tribal and Community College as an ongoing annual event. Career EdVenture activities across the region involve field trips to the local CareerForce Sites as well as resources, especially during COVID-19 to engage the internet offering supported on the CareerForce webpage. Both activities provide an overview for high school students of partners and services available to them for their entire time in the workforce. A Minnesotaworks.net and CareerForce training and registration activity was built into youth activities.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “I would say the most impressive skill Chris has now acquired is his confidence. He believes he belongs in the helping field. He has seen and felt firsthand the reward of being a positive source for people who desperately need it. He is grateful for the opportunity and to figure out how he fits in our society as a young adult.”

– YOUTH COUNSELOR

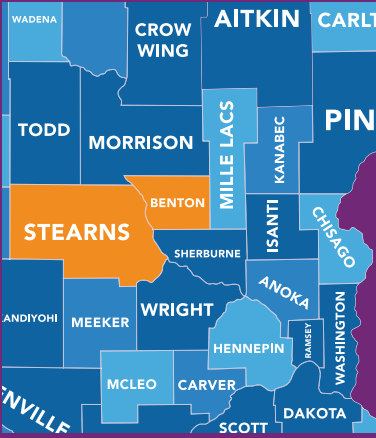
SUCCESS STORY:

Tyler

Tyler was enrolled into the youth program with the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training back in June 2018.

The counselor at the Carlton High School referred Tyler into our program knowing he needs work in the science/ engineering area because of his interests and aptitude. Last summer Tyler was placed with Carlton Water and Soil mapping out culvert systems in the county. This summer he was placed at the Cloquet Forestry Center. Kyle Gill, Forest Manager, was happy to take Tyler on Board. His duties have evolved from plot maintenance and data collection to improving the Arboretum and working with Bio-Char. Tyler’s testimony included “Clare helped me find internships in fields that interest me. The Office of Job Training has helped me build experience.” Tyler’s future is bright as he is accepted into the University of Minnesota, Duluth/ Swenson College of Science and Engineering.





Stearns-Benton Counties

Career Solutions (Formerly Stearns-Benton Employment and Training Council (SBETC))

Tammy Biery, Director
 1542 Northway Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303
 Phone: (320) 308-5702
mn.gov/deed/stcloud
 Area served: Benton and Stearns

OVERVIEW

Career Solutions offers CareerONE, a summer youth employability skills training opportunity utilizing Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) funding. CareerONE provides training in employability skills to include team building and SCANSkill activities, safety training, financial literacy, community work projects, resume writing, job application preparation, interviewing practice, and career exploration.

BEST PRACTICES

CareerONE is a unique, rich and contextual learning experience which has demonstrated success since 2000. Each year, Career Solutions seeks to improve on the model and continue to deliver an elite opportunity for youth. During the summer of 2020, CareerONE had a 97% completion rate. Of those who completed, 88% received employability skills and 100% received safety certificates.

Youth participate in teams of 8-10 led by an adult team leader and a youth assistant leader. The youth assistant leader is a previous CareerONE graduate. The youth leader prepares and delivers the SCANSkill activities to their assigned team and assists the team leader with lesson preparations.

Components of CareerONE consist of — career exploration, team building at YMCA such as wall climbing, MoneySmart FDIC curriculum, SCANS Skills, Youth@Work Talking Safety curriculum, community service projects, employability skills training, reflection and journaling. CareerONE is 20 days in length and operates during June and July.

The Money Smart curriculum is aligned with Minnesota State Standards; applying credit to the youth's transcript is possible. The youth participate in the KeyTrain assessment and use the online KeyTrain curriculum to help increase their math and reading skills. Youth work toward demonstrating skills in attendance, punctuality and dress code; team work, cooperation and safety; work quality and work quantity. Area organizations provide work projects which are completed by the teams.

The youth receive a portfolio containing the certificates they have earned. The certificates that may be obtained include: Career Solutions Employability Skills Certificate by

demonstrating competencies in: Attendance, Punctuality and Dress Code, Safety, Cooperation and Team Work, Work Quality and Work Quantity. A Career Solutions Safety Certificate by demonstrating the ability to be 100% safe and injury free. A Youth at Work Talking Safety Certificate of Completion. An FDIC Money Smart Certificate of Completion. A resume, master application and career plan.

For the third year we held the Health care Track where students could obtain 2.5 college credits by taking a CPR/First Aid Class and an introductory CNA courses. For the second year we the Manufacturing and Construction Track where students learned about masonry, 3D printing, and workplace safety. The construction and Manufacturing Students earned their Osha 10 and 2 college credits. This year we added a Business Tech Track that focused on a product and how to market and sell that product. These students learned Excel and used it to track sales of certain products. Business Tech Track students earned 1 college credit.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

CentraCare and United Way of Central Minnesota partner with CareerONE providing additional funding and work-based learning projects. The CentraCare staff and CEO also participated in career information sessions teaching participants about professions in the health care system. CentraCare employees also provided mock interviews for our students through their virtual interviewing program that they use called "HireVue".

Career Solutions collaborates with area county human services, school districts, juvenile corrections and youth serving agencies in the recruitment of youth and families for CareerONE. Work projects are coordinated with area non-profit organizations to give students work experiences to add to their resumes. A local university and a local bus company assist in the delivery of classrooms, computer labs, transportation, etc. This year we partnered with The Yes Network to provide meals to students on a daily basis.



STRATEGY FOR SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

In the summer of 2020, CareerONE's population consisted of 70% youth of color. The greater St. Cloud area is a diverse mix of youth of color. Because of this diversity, Career Solutions' partnerships with local schools and youth serving agencies ensures that youth of color are being served. Career Solutions attempts to ensure an equal representation of each ethnicity, age, gender, geography, ability to benefit, etc. This allows us to develop teams that expose youth to a variety of experiences and challenge their comfort zone. Applications are processed in order of receipt and due to the high demand for this service we consistently have a waiting list.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

From 7/1/2019-6/30/2020, Career Solutions OTS provided 1077 students with a positive career planning experience. The three school districts are appreciative of the one-to-one and group assistance provided to the students with their career planning needs which assures compliance with the World's Best Workforce legislation requirements.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

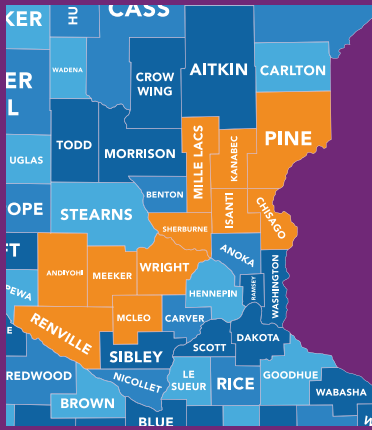
- "I STRONGLY feel that by doing this program I'm more prepared to take on the life challenges from starting my first job."
– STUDENT, PAINESVILLE CAREERONE
- "Overall my experience at CareerONE was great and it has prepared me for the future."
– STUDENT, ST. CLOUD AREA CAREERONE
- "I would one hundred percent recommend you to join CareerONE. I can guarantee you that you will learn a lot of things that you may not even know before, and the program will really help you prepare for your future."
– STUDENT, ST. CLOUD AREA CAREERONE

SUCCESS STORY: Carolyn



I'm Carolyn and I was on Team 1. CareerONE taught me a lot of new skills. I learned how to find jobs in the targeted industry. We learned how to manage money, and build credit. I will definitely use the skills that I learned this year to help me in future job opportunities. I also got to find out what an interview feels like through a mock interview. We went out to worksites and every time we would improve our ability to get things done by using skills that we learned.

But we didn't just work, work, work. There were times when we got to hang out with each other and learn about one another through team building activities. We would play games and talk with each other. For team building activities we played soccer and played games in our zoom meetings. My team also made a group chat so we all had a way to contact everyone. That was very helpful when we had internet issues or when we wanted to double check on our work schedule. CareerONE taught me so much, and I had enjoyed learning. I will be putting my new skills to work.



Central Minnesota

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc.

Barbara Chaffee, CEO

406 East 7th Street, P.O. Box 720, Monticello, MN 55362

Phone: (763) 271-3700

cmjts.org

Area served: Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Pine, Renville, Sherburne, and Wright

OVERVIEW

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc. (CMJTS) is a private, non-profit organization that provides leadership in building a skilled workforce—workers who can do the jobs of today and learn the jobs of tomorrow. Through career counseling, job training, and strong business relationships, CMJTS helps prepare young adults for career pathways and the world of work that leads to meaningful employment. With 13 offices across mostly rural areas, our goal is to assist youth overcome barriers to employment and economic disparities. Through an individualized approach, these services include: work based learning opportunities, career exploration and job search assistance/guidance, provision of labor market information, including information on high-opportunity careers, career success skills development activities, financial literacy training, dropout recovery services, occupational skills training, and entrepreneur development.

BEST PRACTICE

Leadership Development

Helping our area youth develop into leaders is critical to the future of Central Minnesota's workforce and communities. CMJTS provides leadership opportunities to youth through its LEAD (Learn, Empower, Achieve, Discover) program. Youth gain leadership skills utilizing a developed curriculum, which touches upon the development of group rules/culture, self-awareness, leadership, community service, goal setting, taking initiative, time management, coping skills, conflict resolution, and constructive feedback. During this program youth also take part in a group-identified, service-learning project, to give back within their communities and inspire others.

Career Pathway Infographics

As part of the RC3 initiative, career pathway infographics were created and are still being developed to compliment *Occupations in Demand* infographics and DEED LMI data tools. The goal is to develop a career pathway based on each career cluster featured on the Minnesota Department of Education's *Career Wheel*. To date, fifteen career cluster/pathway infographics have been created and are in use, as well as nine occupations in demand infographics. These infographics are being shared with schools, employers, and jobseekers, including parents. They have proven to be an easy launching

point for career exploration and provide a foundation for more in-depth career research. Career pathways in healthcare and manufacturing have been promoted, as these sectors provide a large quantity and wide variety of employment opportunities for workers in Central Minnesota.

SERVING YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Career You)

In partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), CMJTS has become a limited use vendor (LUV) to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to youth with disabilities, ages 14-21, who are potentially eligible for VRS services. Career You provides an opportunity for these youth to explore career and training options, gain work skills, and learn how to be successful after high school, including post-secondary education and/or competitive employment.

Through Career You, youth participate in a 12-week curriculum, one-on-one or through large group activities, centered on job search/exploration, post-secondary education counseling, work-based learning, budgeting, work-readiness training, self-advocacy instruction, and community learning projects.

Integrated Service Delivery

Through participation of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI), CMJTS continues to provide services to youth with disabilities. These services focus on the following key approaches: implementing the Guidepost to Success, incorporating Integrated Resource Teams, and increasing services to Ticket to Work beneficiaries. In addition, CMJTS recognizes the challenge youth face when understanding their social security disability benefits, therefore, CMJTS has three certified work incentive counselors to assist youth in transition in navigating the impact employment will have on their social security benefits.

SERVING YOUTH UNDER-REPRESENTED IN THE WORKFORCE

The Colorful Tomorrow and Y@W projects funded by the Youth at Work Competitive and Support Service Grants target services to youth from communities of color to reduce employment disparities. These projects focus on employment preparation and job skills, training opportunities, provide paid internships/work experiences and other work based



learning opportunities, including the opportunity to explore entrepreneurship, develop career pathways, financial literacy training, and help homeless youth develop independent living skills necessary to increase self-reliance and stability.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

CMJTS is currently partnering with more than 62 organizations and/or schools throughout its 11-county region to provide career counseling services to youth and their families. Schools and/or youth are provided with a list of available opportunities to meet their specific needs in areas such as: labor market information, industries in demand, planning for post-secondary school/employment, career exploration and assessments, scheduled tours of CareerForce centers, colleges, businesses, and connections to community resources, and career success skills preparation.

In addition, OTS services support larger scale, hands-on career exploration events for youth, including Construct Tomorrow, SCRUBS camps, and participation in EPIC. These career exploration events provide high school students with hands-on, interactive activities to better understand what it is like to do work associated with their career fields of interest.

In 2019, CMJTS collaborated and helped organize IGNITE at Ridgewater College. This event was a regional career exploration event for high school sophomores, modeled after the highly successful BRIDGES and EPIC events in Brainerd and St. Cloud. The unique format allowed students to participate in hands-on, interactive experiences relating to a wide variety of industries – meant to provide exposure to jobs and careers available with varying stages of educational achievement. Career clusters represented were:

- Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources
- Arts, Communications & Information Systems
- Business, Management, & Administration
- Engineering, Manufacturing, & Technology
- Health Science Technology
- Human Services

More than 1,200 sophomores from 14 area high schools were hosted and were able to explore 75+ hands-on career activities

The CMJTS Youth Program used OTS funding to provide services to **2,257** students and **401** parents in 2019-2020.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Partnerships play a key role in the success of CMJTS' MYP program. In SFY 2020, these partners included local secondary schools and colleges, county human/social service and public health agencies, court services/probation offices, private businesses, Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), CareerForce partners, Adult Basic Education, community action agencies and other community-based organizations.

CMJTS leverages MYP funds through co-enrollments, with Youth at Work Opportunity Grant Program, TANF Youth Innovation Project, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Youthbuild, Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), Support Service Grant, and other competitive grants to deliver effective wraparound services and to provide youth with additional opportunities for career advancement.

COMMENTS

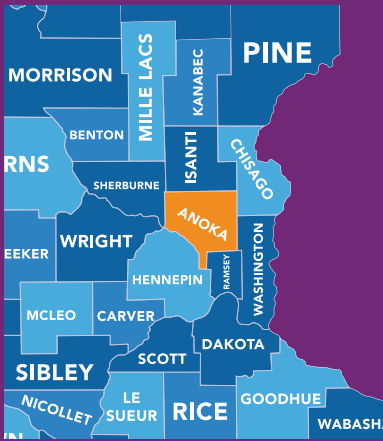
- “Thankfully, being a part of the Youth Program has helped me remain focused on my goal and I have been able to successfully take my first class at Anoka Technical College!” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “I enjoyed enrolling in the job training program especially since I had someone to lead me who clearly loves her job. This program is assisting in my goal to receive my license by paying for the classroom training for my permit and then getting me in behind the wheel courses. One year has passed since starting the program and I’m maintaining my position at Walmart while growing in work ethic.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “Thank you so much for helping students to achieve some of their goals.” – *INSTRUCTOR*

SUCCESS STORY:

I am very grateful for all the help I have received from the CMJTS Youth Program. In the summer of 2018, I enrolled in the program and did not know what to expect. After two years pursuing my Liberal Arts degree at Ridgewater College, I still was not sure what to study when I transferred to St. Cloud State University (SCSU). The Youth Program helped me figure out my field of study and academic ability by going through a series of questionnaires and assessments. I found that my field of interest leaned more toward mathematics and science. I continued my study at SCSU with an environmental science major. In the summer 2019, Delina Woltjer, my Youth Employment Specialist helped me get in contact with the staff at the Prairie Wood Environmental Learning Center (PWELC) in Spicer, MN. With the help from the program, I started my first summer internship as a program coordinator at PWELC.



I am very grateful for all the financial assistance I have received from the program. The youth program has financially helped me get through all the tough times as a college student in terms of tuition and other living expenses. This summer I am a senior at SCSU with a major in Environmental Science and a minor in Chemistry. I am currently doing another internship as a laboratory assistant at the City of St. Cloud Wastewater Laboratory. I honestly do not think I could have made it this far without the help from Delina and CMJTS.



Anoka County

Anoka County Job Training Center

Nicole Swanson, Director

1201 89th Ave NE – Suite 235, Blaine, MN 55434

Phone: (763) 324-2300

anokacounty.us/jtc

Area served: Anoka County

OVERVIEW

Anoka County Job Training Center’s Empowers program, provides year-round services to eligible youth in Anoka County ages 14-24, utilizing funds through both the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). Young adults served include those from economically disadvantaged families and/or public assistance recipients, are not in school, experiencing homelessness, aging out of foster care, high school dropouts, and unemployed and underemployed young people without postsecondary training. A variety of services are provided including assessments and goal setting, assistance with completing high school and/or obtaining an in-demand industry recognized credential, vocational counseling, postsecondary planning, work experience/internships, financial literacy, job search and/or job placement assistance.

Many of the youth in our Empowers program are co-enrolled utilizing MYP funding. This provides staff the ability to leverage funds to assist the youth in meeting their goals on their Individualized Service Strategy. Through the braiding of funding, youth enrolled in MYP may be served through other funding such as Youth at Work, federal financial aid resources, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and Pathways to Prosperity to assist in paying for things such as credentialed training after high school completion and local Anoka County Community Action Funds to assist with support services such as transportation.

BEST PRACTICES

Empowers has increased exposure to career pathways and digital literacy through a well-rounded network of providers and partnerships, for example:

- Drop-in Service days were added this past year as standing time for interested youth to connect with our Empowers team. The reserved time could be booked for an individual basic career service or be used to provide information on programs or other community resource referrals. This service is promoted through our school and community-based organization network as well as appears as an individual service on CareerForce.com
- Youth work with their employment counselors to identify interests and possible work sites that allow the youth to build skills, manage transportation issues and other

responsibilities such as schoolwork. The Empowers team uses their network to make connections at various sites and to develop new sites to assist youth in meeting their goals. A recent young adult wanted a work experience that would assist a possible writing career pathway and we were able to work with the Anoka County Library system to find a research position on local plants and flowers.

- Youth are often new to financial matters when starting a paid work experience. Our team has created tip sheets and organized them by topic on our website so that youth can access the information 365/24/7. In the past, we sent the information via email, but emails can get lost or deleted. This resource can be used by new, existing and past participants.
- Youth with some work experience and a well-defined pathway are offered an internship. These internships, with a variety of local employers partnering with us, align with their pathway and are typically 3 months in length, offer a higher wage and boost their skills sets and exposure to more aspects of the business.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS/ CAREER ADVISOR COMPONENT

Empowers allocates a percentage of MYP funds to provide Outreach to Schools (OTS). The activities complement the work of existing school counselors and provide young people career exploration and career guidance, college information and current labor market information with an emphasis on high demand occupations. Examples of OTS activities include:

- Facilitating virtual or in person workshops at schools covering topics including planning for post-secondary training, accessing financial aid, selecting an appropriate program, goal setting and navigating business culture.
- Providing opportunities to interact with local business through virtual or in person tours, business and industry speaker panels, job shadowing, and mentoring.
- Facilitating weekly On-Site and/or Virtual Hiring Events for our local employers and an industry specific panel including: Health Care, Trades and the Annual Apprenticeship Summit.



- Providing information on services provided by CareerForce in Blaine and partners in our one stop location.
- Maintaining a CareerForce satellite office on the campus of Anoka Technical College (ATC) which is co-located with Adult Basic Education and the area alternative learning center and Anoka Hennepin Technical High School (AHTHS).
- Offering of weekly on-site/virtual hours at Hope4Youth (Drop-in Center for youth experiencing homelessness) and weekly on-site hours at Hope Place – a transitional housing facility for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Group and individual counseling, including instruction and presentations of DEED Data Tools that provide labor market information and education opportunities of high growth and in-demand occupations.

- Partnering with the Future Leaders Program through Anoka-Hennepin District 11 which offers young people representing diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, mostly juniors and seniors, the opportunity to tutor in elementary schools and after school programming. The Future Leaders receive training in leadership to assist them in working through issues that are challenging for youth of color.
- Partnering with our Metro North Adult Basic Education Providers that has additional locations in more urban settings has helped us expand our outreach to communities of color. Of the 235 youth that were served through MYP during the last program year, 47% were youth of color.
- Partnering with Vocational Rehabilitation through our Pre-ETS programing has increased our overall outreach to young people with disabilities. This program year, of the 235 youth served in MYP, 57.8 % of them had a disability.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

The current partnership network includes Anoka County Economic Assistance and Social Services Departments, the YMCA, Perkins-Oakland Consortium, local high schools and educational learning centers, Hope4Youth (the local youth homeless drop-in center) and Hope Place (transitional housing for homeless youth), Metro North Adult Basic Education (ABE), the Minnesota Family Investment and Diversionary Work Programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Anoka Technical College (ATC), Anoka Ramsey Community College (ARCC), Job Corps and VRS.

Additionally, Empowers staff maintain regular communication with representatives from the Anoka County Social Services Department’s Foster Care Unit, Juvenile Corrections, Stepping Stone Shelter, local secondary schools in an ongoing effort to recruit young people for the program. Staff also work closely with the CareerForce on-site TRIO Student Support Services/ Academic Advisor. The Standing Youth Committee has members from many of these agencies to ensure strong communications and linkages are maintained to serve young adults.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

There are many ongoing and targeted efforts to connect with Youth from communities of color and youth with disabilities such as:

- Outreach to teen parents and youth of color in more high schools, alternative schools and community partners that predominately serve youth of color. This includes partnerships with the YMCA, Hope4Youth and the Anoka-Hennepin Teen Parent program and Job Corp.
- Partnering with Minneapolis Urban League (MUL) to provide an on-site counselor that specializes in culturally specific services to African American and/or Native American individuals receiving MFIP.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “I would like to thank you for coming and giving us an amazing presentation on Employment and Labor. I learned a few more tricks from your presentation that I will use later in an interview for a job. Thank you again.”
– HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
- “Thank you all for all of your help, and support. without you guys I wouldn’t have had so many opportunities or found my niche. I plan to continue my education and hopefully become an RN soon.”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT

SUCCESS STORY: Lucy

Lucy was referred to the county's Pre-ETS program in 2019 by her school counselor. She was getting ready to graduate and was also interested in completing the 911 Telecommunications training through Career Pathways. Staff co-enrolled her in MYP as well to provide all around support with her plan. While working with her counselor she obtained her High School Diploma and was referred to the 911 Training Navigator. Before being accepted to the program she needed to pass all required testing. These tests included a typing test, digital literacy test, and the Math and Reading TABE tests. Lucy passed her required tests and continued to work on typing speeds to improve her employability as a 911 dispatcher. Lucy completed the program and with the help of her Career Pathway Navigator and Pre-ETS counselor found a job as a dispatcher at Allina making \$20/hr.



City of Minneapolis

Minneapolis Employment and Training

DebBahr-Helgen, Director

105 5th Avenue South, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55401-2593

Phone: (612) 673-6226

minneapolismn.gov

Area served: City of Minneapolis

OVERVIEW

Step Up prepares today's youth for tomorrow's careers by recruiting, training and placing nearly 1,400 young people (ages 14-21) in paid internships each year with over 200 regional employers from Fortune 500 companies and small businesses, to public agencies and nonprofits. As one of the nation's leading youth employment programs, Step Up leverages a collective of more than 200 partners spanning 15 industries and multiple sectors. It's a backbone of support that unites businesses, schools, nonprofits and the city together in a common goal: to build and strengthen our future economy and the talented youth who will power it.

Step Up supports historically underrepresented youth in Minneapolis who are ready to navigate the professional world. The program helps organizations diversify their workforce and build a base of young skilled workers for the entire region. Step Up has provided over 28,000 internships since 2003, yielding a competitive talent pipeline, a stronger economy and millions of dollars in wages for Step Up interns.

Building a globally-fluent and multicultural workforce starts with hiring. 89 percent of Step Up interns are people of color, and 46 percent come from immigrant families. This is the kind of diversity that promotes the multicultural workforce of the future.

BEST PRACTICES

Work Readiness

All Step Up interns complete interactive classroom training in the spring that prepares them for a successful work experience in a professional setting. Due to the onset of COVID-19, 2020 provided unique challenges to this model. As a result, participants were offered a blend of in person and virtual work readiness trainings. Changes to the workforce landscape also drastically reduced the number of internships available. To still provide a meaningful experience to applicants, there was an option provided to non-internship placed eligible participants to enroll in a virtual paid summer learning experience. 88% of interns successfully complete their internship and earn a work readiness credential designed and approved by the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Career Pathways Exposure and Industry Specific Trainings

Step Up works to provide interested interns with industry specific exposure to career options, trainings, and internships in a variety of fields, including: STEM, Healthcare, Financial and Legal, and Outdoor Careers.

Academic Credit

In 2020, over 1800 youth had the opportunity to earn academic credit through a variety of program models. Youth placed in internships were able to earn academic elective credit through the completion of their work readiness trainings including an online professional development lesson, and eligible applicants were also able to earn academic elective credit by completing all 5 weeks of the Online Summer Learning Program.

Within the internship program model, Level 1 and 2 interns were given the opportunity to earn 0.5 academic elective credit for their combined work readiness trainings and online professional development work. We expect that nearly 325 interns earned credit. Within the Online Summer Learning program model, eligible participants were able to earn 0.5 academic elective credit for completing a series of modules and activities each of the 5 weeks that programming was in session. Learners were assigned a licensed teacher as their Trainer Coach to help answer questions and guide them with their summer learning. We expect that 593 students earned credit.

This is the third year of a phased partnership with Project for Pride and living (PPL) to align our Step Up curriculum with the Minneapolis public Schools' Career Readiness Seminar class. With needing to quickly pivot and develop new programming for this summer, we worked to figure out how to still provide meaningful experiences for young people this summer and were still able to incorporate our core learning objectives in an online learning platform called LRNG. The LRNG platform is a highly engaging digital-first technology platform designed for today's hyper-social, always connected lifestyle that was built on curating the experiences, resources, and people needed to transform the way young people access and experience learning.



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Step Up is a collective of partners—a backbone of support that joins the City, nonprofits, businesses, corporations, schools and students, and their families together in a common goal: to prepare today’s youth for tomorrow’s careers and build a strong regional economy. Directed by the City of Minneapolis, Step Up wouldn’t be possible without the support of several important community partners. AchieveMpls, Project for Pride in Living and CareerForce Minneapolis all partner and support the work of Step Up.

SERVING UNDERREPRESENTED YOUTH

Step Up extensively recruits youth in all the large high schools in Minneapolis. Our team also recruits in several charter and alternative schools in order to reach more underrepresented youth. Additionally, our staff does robust outreach to community-based partners and Parks to share resources to help youth apply to our program.

FEEDBACK FROM EMPLOYERS AND INTERNS

Feedback from employers and supervisors is essential to Step Up as we continue to innovate and improve the program to better serve our youth and community. This year, 92% of supervisors reported that their Step Up intern made a valuable contribution to their workplace and 92% said the intern referred to their company was a good match for the position.

In addition to satisfaction with the program and the matches made at their businesses, supervisors were asked about what they most enjoyed about their participation with Step Up. Most supervisors said being able to witness and influence the growth and development of their intern through the experience was most valuable.

- 92% of Step Up Interns agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I felt I made a valuable contribution to my workplace.”
- 94% of Step Up Interns agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “My summer job was a valuable learning experience.”

Supervisor comments:

- “Our intern brought great energy and fun to our team and was delightful to get to know and to work with.”
- “I enjoyed having young fresh minds at the work place and getting to teach them/guide them in their first work experience while improving my supervisor skills.”
- “Being connected to young people with fresh perspectives and views, sharing skills with someone who was eager to learn and watching them grow.

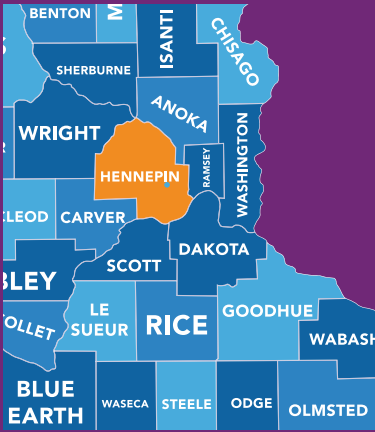
Intern comments:

- “I benefited from participating in the Step Up internship program by being able to still work during COVID. I’ve also learned more about different career paths.”
- “I’ve got to raise money for college, gain some new mentors and learned more about jobs I haven’t considered.”
- “I have benefited by becoming more open minded and learning about the different types of career interests out there & the educational opportunities.”
- “I’m a lot more familiar with what it’s like to have a job and feel like I gained some really valuable experiences from it and improved on some of my skills like curating, thinking outside the box, and becoming more comfortable with public speaking and most importantly, I have a better understanding that my voice is important and deserves to be heard.”



SUCCESS STORY: Edward

Edward is a sophomore at St Louis Park High School. Through Step Up, this summer he had his first job working as a teacher’s assistant at the YMCA – Harold Mezile North Community Teen Enrichment Center. His cousin suggested he apply to Step Up to make money at a fun job. And yes, he did have fun this summer. Edward looked forward to coming to work. He made friends with his co-workers. He loved being with the kids and taking part in activities with them. He says he learned the importance of consistency—showing up on time each day. He also learned how to be patient, especially when dealing with young children. His supervisors, Rich & Savannah treated him with respect, including him in decision making and daily planning activities. Edward feels both the pre-internship workshops and the on-the-job training will help in the future. His future includes next summer as a Step Up intern and farther out as a Marine Biologist or Elementary School Teacher.



Hennepin County

Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Area

Anne Kilzer, Director

Hennepin County A-400 Government Center

300 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55487

Phone: 612-558-6399

hennepin.us

Area served: Hennepin (excluding the City of Minneapolis)

OVERVIEW

The Hennepin County Summer Youth Employment and Training Program funded through the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) offers critical work experience opportunities to low income and at-risk suburban youth ages 14 to 24. The goal is to meaningfully invest in young people who are the most likely to face threats to long term economic success and connect them with experiences at a critical period in their lives. The summer youth program addresses the specific needs of our participants and the diversity of challenges they face by integrating social and emotional learning, work readiness training, community engagement, career pathway exposure, immediate earnings from structured well-supervised work, and opportunities to earn academic credit or service-learning credit. Hennepin County selected Tree Trust and BrookLynk as MYP providers to ensure that youth receive early exposure to experiential employment for the greatest predictor of future success in the workplace.

Tree Trust typically offers a nine-week work experience, employing youth on outdoor Youth Conservation Corps crews for park improvement projects or indoor individualized internships. However due to the coronavirus, the overall program was reduced to 7 weeks. Despite this, Tree Trust was still able to employ 36 participants in the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and 3 of those at individual internship sites. Tree Trust youth work an average of 20 hours a week and can earn merit-based raises. They can earn up to two elective academic credits through a partnership with Northeast Metro 916 Area Learning Center, by completing Team Tech lessons designed to enrich understanding of the project impact on the community, personal finances, and future employment. One credit can be earned for every 75 hours of work. Advanced skill development in Project Cost Estimation is offered as a sector specific skill for in-demand construction pathways.

BrookLynk, in its first year as an MYP summer youth provider, employed 96 youth in 10-week-long summer internships with employer paid wages from over 20 employers located near and around the cities of Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center. In addition to summer work experiences, youth receive work readiness skills training in resume writing, interviewing and networking skills; communications, diversity at work, and more.

BEST PRACTICES

Program Design

Understanding the varied needs of youth living within the large suburban metro area, the Hennepin County MYP program design offers two approaches to work experience. Tree Trust programs appeal to the hands-on style or kinesthetic learning model while BrookLynk works with the local school districts within Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center to recruit youth and provide professional pathways where barriers to access may have existed.

Employer Engagement and Supervisor Training

Recognizing the incredible contribution and perspective of the youth who participate enhances the internship experience. BrookLynk provides supervisor training that focuses on mentoring youth, cultural competencies and implicit bias training. As part of the employer recruitment, employers for BrookLynk commit to paying 100% of the youth wages and through that demonstrate a proven commitment to the community and workforce development.

SERVING UNDERREPRESENTED YOUTH

In Hennepin County's 2020 program, via Tree Trust and BrookLynk, 66% of participants were from communities of color, 22% were youth with an identified disability, and 40% of youth were on an individual education plan (IEP). A referral network of over 40 partners assist in reaching youth from within high schools, non-profit organizations, city and county parks and recreation staff.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

The Hennepin County MYP Summer Youth Employment and Training Program is a collaborative partnership consisting of BrookLynk, Tree Trust, local area schools, community-based organizations, parks and recreational agencies, municipalities, and chambers of commerce. Employers we collaborate with include Cummins Power Systems, Boston Scientific, Design Ready Controls, Liberty Carton, Lexington Manufacturing,

TopLine Federal Credit Union, Midtown Greenway, Three Rivers Park District, Interfaith Outreach, PRISM, Open Circle, Common Bond, Arc's Value Village, VEAP, the cities of Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center, Hennepin County and more.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- "I am more confident than I was before Tree Trust. The best part of my program was doing the projects and spending time with my crew." – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- "The Youth Crews on the Midtown Greenway site, under the leadership of the Crew Leader, Site Supervisor and Job Coach, moved as a team 46,000lbs of gravel by buckets and wheel barrow to cover the underside of the Bloomington Ave bridge. In addition to this they also raised the height of an existing retaining wall 1 course. They did this as part of the county's vision plan to make this section of the pedestrian corridor more organized, safe, and comfortable to be in." – *WORKSITE SUPERVISOR*
- "It gave me a different outlook on the community. The experience really helped open my eyes, and I like that I can have something to come back to look at in the future." – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*

SUCCESS STORY: Ja'den

Ja'den Vargas was a recipient of the Governor's Award in Tree Trust's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). He was recognized for a multitude of positive characteristics and outcomes. Some of them being: Going above and beyond his assigned tasks, developing leadership skills, helping to resolve conflicts between crew members, very high quality of work, creativity in problem solving, punctuality and his ability to motivate his teammates.

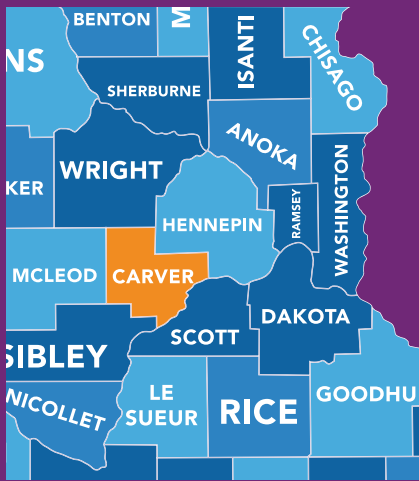


Ja'den worked at Westwood Hills Nature Center in St. Louis Park in SYEP and stated that he loved his experience with his crew. His Crew Leader stated that his initiative improved dramatically from the start of SYEP in late June to the end of the program in August.

SUCCESS STORY: Hawa

Hawa joined BrookLynk in 2017 as a 10th grader with interest in pursuing a career in health care. Hawa was certain that BrookLynk was the program that would help her to gain new skills, meet new people, and achieve her goals. Hawa excelled as a youth intern attending all trainings and events, taking every opportunity to grow as an emerging professional, and utilized the BrookLynk job coaches for 1:1 support to help her both in and outside of the program. During her second year with BrookLynk she was matched to a summer internship with Boston Scientific, a medical device manufacturer. While interning at Boston Scientific she had the opportunity to work alongside human resource specialists and production managers; building relationships with colleagues that introduced her to new experiences daily. Upon completion of her summer internship she was hired as a training coordinator facilitating new hire orientations, trainer development courses, and performance tracking. In addition to working at Boston Scientific, Hawa is now in her third year at the University of Minnesota studying Health Services Management and continues excel in her work and studies. Additionally, Hawa remains and integral part of BrookLynk as a youth liaison sitting on the programs advisory committee and as a trainer at Get Ready! youth work readiness training.





Carver County

Carver County Health & Human Services

Kate Probert Fagundes, Income Support Manager

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Phone: (952) 361-1600

co.carver.mn.us

Area served: Carver

OVERVIEW

Due to COVID19 the Carver County Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), funded with state MYP funds, was adapted to meet the needs of youth who could not participate in onsite jobs. The focus was on Career Exploration, and youth were able to participate in 4 Career Exploration webinars using WebEx. Our goal was to provide interactive webinars that lead to self-discovery through career exploration. A strong focus of the webinars was to help the youth understand the training or education that would be required to achieve their employment goal, and to help the youth learn how to take the necessary steps to achieve their employment goal. Many resources were provided, in print or as links to websites for the following topics: job shadowing, informational interviews, apprenticeships, places to volunteer and how to apply to college. Another tool utilized was: Get a Reality Check. This is a very realistic tool to help youth understand the true costs of living and to be able to compare the income of their desired career with the expected income of their career.

Before the first Career Exploration webinar the youth were introduced to career exploration by completing O-Net's mynextmove.org assessment. This assessment is based on the theory of John Holland. The website provides a job interest report based on their assessment results, so youth have this information immediately upon completion of the assessment and were ready for the first Career Exploration webinar. The intention of using this assessment is to get the youth thinking about future career opportunities, and the training and education that may be needed to support their field of interest.

Pre-employment and Financial Literacy webinars were offered through Zoom. The Pre-Employment webinar provided the youth the opportunity to learn about essential "soft skills" prior to a job interview. One of our goals is to offer youth skills that they can use in everyday life. We also offered a Financial Literacy webinar as part of the summer youth program.

At the end of the webinars youth are encouraged to connect with CareerForce in Chaska to receive guidance from an Employment Counselor on building or enhancing a resume, pointers on interviewing, and/or assistance with job search and accessing training and support services.

BEST PRACTICES/ COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Although we did not have a work experience component this summer due to the pandemic, Carver County collaborates with Southwest Metro Co-op for Youth Build, Three Rivers Park District (youth are employed at Gale Woods Farm), and several local employers who support youth in the community by providing the workplace experiences, opportunities, and leadership to assist in the youth's success. We will continue to work to set up work experience for youth that need it throughout the school year. Multiple independent businesses, including Good Samaritan Society, Auburn Manor and Clover Ridge Elementary have all previously provided a genuine work experience and the worksite supervisors exhibited patience and created a supportive environment, while coaching and teaching youth skills needed to demonstrate appropriate work behavior, providing information about accountability, and offering valuable feedback during evaluations to help prepare youth for future employment and life. The Youth build work site also provides the opportunity for youth to earn academic credit while they learn valuable skills in the carpentry trade.

Pre-Employment Skills and Financial Literacy workshops were provided by the same vendor we utilized in 2019.

Carver County braids MYP funding with WIOA youth funding and all participants were co-enrolled, if eligible, into both programs to maximize resources available to them.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Carver County's goal is to recruit as many eligible youth as possible each year. We enrolled 5 youth, all 5 are traditionally under-represented in the workforce due to their race or disability. Carver County is focusing on system integration to ensure that services have deep impacts on the lives of youth. School counselors, teachers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, DEED staff, Health and Human Service case managers, and corrections identify the Summer Youth Program as a valuable opportunity for providing necessary skills for the youth.



All the partners are committed to providing support and program enhancements to ensure the success of the youth participants. In addition to the 5 youth that were served, another 2 youth began the application process. Carver County is focusing on providing services to all individuals with equity and cultural considerations in mind. If deemed ineligible for our programming, Carver County makes every effort to offer them additional resources and referrals to ensure their success.

SUCCESS STORY: **Robert**

Robert, age 18, was referred to the Summer Youth Employment Program by the Special Education Coordinator of the Eastern Carver County School District. He was interested in the Youth Build program because of his interest a career in construction, and his need to earn academic credit. Due to COVID19, the Summer Youth Build Program was cancelled by SW Metro Educational Cooperative.

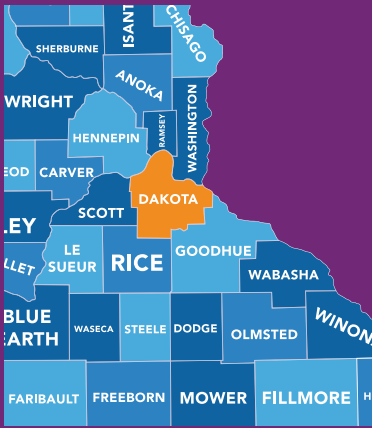
This was Robert's first year in the Summer Youth Employment Program, and he completed all six of the webinars: Pre-Employment, Financial Literacy and Career Exploration (4 sessions). He was very engaged and regularly contributed to the discussion and asked good questions.

The my next move career assessment tool helped him to learn more about himself. His 2 highest scores were in the Realistic and Social areas. He stated that he felt that construction was a good fit for him because he is a hands-on person and enjoys being outdoors. He stated the Social high score was a bit of a surprise to him, but as we discussed it more, he began to understand why his score was high in that area. He realized that he has helped people by listening and being there for them, and that he enjoys it.

He has begun to investigate attending either Dunwoody College of Technology in Minneapolis, or Hennepin Technical College to complete their construction program. He learned about how to complete the steps to apply and enroll. He also learned about apprenticeships in the area that he can consider.

Another helpful tool that Robert learned about was the "Reality Check" tool on the Careerwise website. It helped him gain a better understanding of what it really costs to live independently, and how a career in construction can help him achieve his desired lifestyle.

Robert is returning to high school classes this fall, and looks forward to graduating, and becoming more independent. The summer program helped Robert think more realistically and learn about how he can move ahead to achieve his goals.



Dakota County

Dakota-Scott Workforce Services

Mark Jacobs, Director

1 Mendota Road West – Suite 100, West St. Paul, MN 55118

Phone: (952) 496-8510

careerforcemn.com/partner/dakota-scott-county-workforce-services

Area served: Dakota and Scott Counties

OVERVIEW

Tree Trust offers several summer work experience opportunities to eligible youth for up to seven weeks designed to teach work-readiness skills in a supportive and realistic work environment. During the summer of 2020, Tree Trust employed 37 Dakota County youth through the Minnesota Youth Program with 36 placed in Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crew positions and one youth placed in an Individual Site position.

Youth Conservation Corps Crew

Youth worked in nine different supervised crews of four to complete landscape construction projects that improved the community environment while building youth competencies in employment skills. Participants worked one to two eight-hour days per week and could earn a merit-based raise, elective academic credits, and receive recognition at an award ceremony upon program completion.

In 2019, Dakota County crews completed the following projects:

- Installed an engineered woodchip base around 14 playgrounds in Inver Grove Heights.
- Refreshed woodchips around the 18-hole frisbee golf course at North & South Valleys Parks in Inver Grove Heights.
- Installed a timber edger around a playground at Sunset Park in Apple Valley.
- Refreshed woodchips around the frisbee disc golf course at Alimagnet Park, Apple Valley.

Individual Site

Despite many businesses limiting internships due to Covid-19 restrictions, Tree Trust was able to place one youth with a local private business, Market Distributing. This youth worked an average of 20 hours per week and earned a merit-based raise as well as academic credit.

BEST PRACTICES

Unique opportunities to participate in skill development

Tree Trust YCC crew members gain hands-on skills in construction and landscaping. They also learn how to use and care for tools and about worksite safety. In addition,

crew members participate in an education component called Employment Skills Training. The curriculum is designed to help foster understanding about what skills are essential for success in the world of work. The lessons are completed using computer tablets and facilitated by a Tree Trust Employment Skills Instructor. The following four lessons are delivered over the summer: Creating a Budget, Career Exploration, Resume Writing, and Completing a Job Application.

Opportunity for youth to earn academic credit

Youth participants in Tree Trust’s Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) can earn elective academic credit during the course of their summer employment through a partnership with Northeast metro 916 Area Learning Center. The Employment Skills Training lessons enrich workers understanding of their project and its impact on the community, their personal finances and the impact this job can have on their future employment. Youth must complete the required number of hours to earn credit.

Financial Literacy training for youth participants

The Creating a Budget lesson provided youth the opportunity to improve their financial literacy. Youth prepare a spread sheet that shows their gross pay, taxes and other deductions, and net pay. They then decide how much of their total earning they would like to save and how much they would like to spend. Youth also develop an understanding of the financial consequences of missing a day of work.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Tree Trust partners with CareerForce, area schools, and county libraries to aid in the youth recruitment application process. Park and recreation agencies, municipalities, public schools, and private businesses collaborate with Tree Trust to provide projects and worksites.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “I learned to be more assertive with people who have different opinions and experiences than me.”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT
- “Tree Trust has impacted my life in that where there is a problem, I try to solve it.”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT



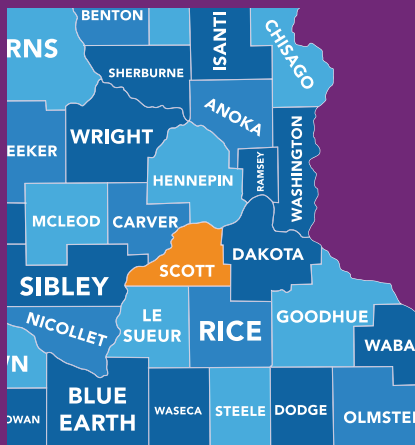
SUCCESS STORY: **Annika**

Annika Schmillen participated in the 2020 Tree Trust Summer Youth Employment Program at Sunset Park and Alimagnet Park in Apple Valley. Annika's crew leader, Patrick, said, "Annika came ready to work hard each day. She was not only on time, but always arrived with a positive attitude." Her crew leader was also impressed how her leadership abilities developed throughout the summer. Patrick continued by saying, "Annika became comfortable as a leader on the crew and would take on 2-3 daily leadership roles, including stretching, running the crew and solving problems."

These attributes and her ability to have fun at the work site culminated into Annika receiving the Governor's Award for her four-person crew. The Governor's Award is issued by the Office of Governor Tim Walz to recognize individuals who have gone above and beyond the standard expectations at a worksite. Recipients are nominated by their Crew Leader.

When Annika was asked about her summer, she said, "It was a good experience working with others and positive experience for my first paying job." It probably comes as no surprise that Annika's favorite part of her summer work experience was "pushing myself to reach my goals." Well done, Annika!





Scott County

Dakota-Scott Workforce Services

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Phone: (952) 496-8510

careerforcemn.com/partner/dakota-scott-county-workforce-services

Area served: Dakota and Scott Counties

OVERVIEW

Scott County Minnesota Youth Program youth participated in the summer program, with several participating year-round for career counseling, training, work experience, or job placement. Scott County utilizes a portion of the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) funding to assist youth that need credit recovery; especially high school seniors needing credits to get their high school diploma. Other youth are enrolled to assist with their education, training and work experience goals. MYP youth in post-secondary education programs include nursing assistant, auto mechanic and registered nurse.

BEST PRACTICE

Scott County has collaborated with SouthWest Metro Intermediate District 288 (formerly Carver Scott Educational Cooperative) for the past 20+ years in credit recovery programs including Youthbuild and Makerspace. Many youth have acquired credits to maintain grade level or to complete their high school diploma requirements during these summer activities. Students also gain skills in leadership, financial literacy, social/civics, OSHA 10, carpentry/landscaping skills and community awareness. The Youthbuild students also complete certification for CPR and First aid.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

- SouthWest Metro Intermediate District 288 - Youthbuild and Makerspace credit recovery and work experience programs.
- Public, non-profit and private sector employers – work experience programs
- Local secondary and alternative schools – referrals and worksites
- CAP Agency – referrals and worksites
- Scott County – referrals and worksites
- CareerForce location partners - referrals and worksite development
- Training vendors/agencies – education and training

Scott County E&T administers many programs including the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), Workforce Innovation and

Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth and Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Employment Services. Counselors do case reviews and internal referrals to youth programs. Youth are co-enrolled into other programs to help them achieve their goals. Scott County Employment and Training also collaborates with local youth serving agencies to serve targeted populations.

State, federal and local resources leveraged by MYP funds: County funds, WIOA Youth Program funds, WIOA Adult funds, TANF Consolidated Fund, YouthBuild funds, and local school funds.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

Scott County staff recruited program applications from schools, previous enrollees, and youth serving organizations. Program participants come from a wide variety of backgrounds, race, ethnicity, income levels, poverty groups, and abilities/disabilities.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

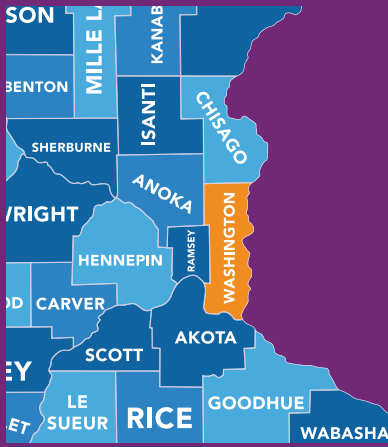
- “This program has taught me to be more responsible and has improved my attendance.”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT
- “Everything was new to me because I have never had a job or anything before. I learned that I can do it.”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT
- “I learned that I am a lot stronger and smarter than I thought I was.” – YOUTH PARTICIPANT
- “It was great seeing the kids learn to trust themselves and gain confidence.” – SUPERVISOR
- “The students really overcame a lot of fears and tried many new things they have not done before.”
– SUPERVISOR



SUCCESS STORY: **Alyssa**

Alyssa came to the CareerForce location originally as a Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) participant. She was in a difficult situation because she had just given birth to a child with significant medical complications. She spoke with her employment counselor and told her that she always wanted to be a nurse because she really wanted a job where she could care for others. She was referred to and co-enrolled on the MYP program and started a plan to get her Nursing Assistant Certification. After achieving her nursing assistant certification, she started school right away to earn her Practical Nursing degree. She started a part time job at a local health care facility utilizing her training. Her long term goal was always to become a registered nurse. This past fall she was accepted into and started nursing school at Normandale Community college and will soon earn her Bachelor's Degree in nursing.

Alyssa stated that the "MYP program has helped her greatly by reducing some of her financial stress and that has allowed her to use that focus on her school and her son, and her counselors provided the encouragement she needed when things got tough." Alyssa stated she was honored to be able to showcase the youth program and how people can benefit from it.



Washington County

Washington County CareerForce

Rick Roy, Workforce & Veterans Services Division Manager

Woodbury Service Center

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Phone: (651) 275-8650

mn.gov/deed/woodbury

Area served: Washington

OVERVIEW

Washington County provides a mix of direct and contracted work experience and career pathway activities to eligible youth, although COVID-19 impacted design and delivery of both our direct and contracted services during the summer of 2020. Contracted services with Tree Trust were scaled back to accommodate social distancing and for work to be completed in a condensed timeframe during the summer, once we knew what Minnesota's and CDC's guidelines would allow. Our plan to provide support for ALC students working and completing credit recovery coursework over the summer ran into difficulties given the online vs. classroom-based instruction within the schools, and the interruptions to many of those students' worksites. We will work again with the ALCs during the school year to implement a similar model of incentives for the students when achieving milestones in work and/or curriculum, and providing 1:1 and group (if allowed) career pathway activities and guidance for the students.

BEST PRACTICES

Work Readiness

Contracted services through Tree Trust offer summer work experience opportunities designed to teach work-readiness skills in a supportive and realistic work environment through its Summer Youth Employment Program. Skills taught include basic measuring and math, use of basic hand tools, and worksite safety within the context of public community space improvement through landscaping work. Youth received additional instruction on work search, including purpose of and best approach to completing applications and interviews, if they elected to continue in the career pathways component following their paid work experience.

Youth Conservation Corps Crew

Tree Trust employed 12 Washington County youth in summer 2020 at Lake Elmo Park in Lake Elmo, MN. They worked for four weeks on a supervised crew of six to complete native prairie restoration by removing non-native and invasive species, removal of dead and downed limbs and trees to reduce fuel loads and fire hazard, and pruned overgrowth for improved trail passage and access. The work completed improved the County public park's environment, while building youth competencies in employment skills. Participants worked

two to three eight-hour days per week and could earn a merit-based raise. Youth also completed basic occupational interest assessments to be prepared for the career pathways component following their conservation corps crew work.

Career Pathways Exposure

Following their work with Tree Trust, 7 youth elected to participate in virtual, 1:1 career pathways activities to explore occupational interests and earn incentives for completing guided, interactive assignments. CareerForce staff guided assignments focused on selection of 2-3 occupations that most interest the youth; the skills and types of training required for those occupations, review of the labor market (including wages) for those occupations, both at the county level and regionally; identification of avenues of training to enter and advance in those occupations.

SERVING YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Tree Trust has 40 years of experience working with youth with disabilities. In 2020, 66% of participants served in Washington County identified as having a disability. Recruiting is accomplished through targeted outreach to, and referrals from, partner organizations that work directly with this population. Serving these youth and helping them find success in the workplace is foundational to Tree Trust's mission.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Tree Trust partners with area schools, county libraries, and CareerForce locations to aid in the youth recruitment application process. Park and recreation agencies, municipalities, public schools, and private businesses collaborate with Tree Trust to provide projects and worksites.

Washington County has also had a history of collaboration with Family Means, a community-based agency that provides after-school and summer programming for children and teens in low income communities. Washington County's MN Youth Program offers paid work experience to typically older youth who live in the communities. They work as program assistants in the after-school and summer activities, as well as serve as mentors to younger youth participating in the Family Means programs, gaining leadership and work readiness skills. As a result the younger youth have positive role models within their own community. Many have been overheard saying that they want



to be a program assistant when they get older. This year we will be working with Family Means on a project implementing leadership development curriculum designed by 4-H, and delivered to older youth living in the communities. Those youth in turn will help develop, then deliver, a “community version” of Family Means’ “Ready To Be” postsecondary pathways project to other teens in face-to-face workshops and/or digitally.

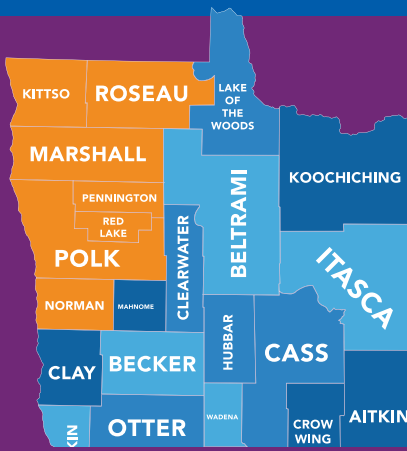
CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “Tree Trust helped me to meet new people and to prepare myself for my future in the workplace.”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT
- “I learned how to take charge during a project.”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT

SUCCESS STORY: Jacob

Jacob participated in the 2020 Tree Trust Summer Youth Employment Program at the Lake Elmo Park Reserve. Jacob’s crew leader said, “He was a very hard and persistent worker.” She was also impressed that Jacob “grew into a leadership role and was always one of the first crew members to volunteer for a task.” This year’s participants had the additional challenges of wearing a mask and social distancing while working outside in the heat. Jacob’s crew leader saw great improvement in how “he adapted to the harsh working conditions and having to wear a mask throughout the summer.” These culminated into Jacob receiving the Governor’s Award for his crew. Upon asking Jacob about his favorite part of the program, true to his character, he said “Log hauling and finishing a hard day’s work.” Well done, Jacob!





Northwest Minnesota

Northwest Minnesota Inter County Community Council (ICCC)

Catherine Johnson, Executive Director

207 Main Street, P.O. Box 189, Oklee, MN 56742

Phone: (218) 796-5144

intercountycc.org

Area served: Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, and Roseau

OVERVIEW

In WDA 1, Inter-County Community Council (ICCC) provides youth programs year-round for at-risk youth ages 14-24. ICCC works with education providers, social service agencies, probation officers, family services, and foster care to identify youth who are at risk. ICCC connects youth who have significant barriers to activities and/or employment opportunities that assist with reducing barriers to employment. ICCC focuses on assisting youth participants with developing and maintaining job and soft skills in order to be successful in the workforce or a higher education program. ICCC Case Managers review in-demand occupations and provide youth participants with assessment tools to identify the best career choice based on their individual interests. ICCC provides services through paid work experiences and additional training if needed. This includes but isn't limited to; GED, high school diploma, post-secondary education or occupational certifications. ICCC Employment Case Managers work closely with each youth participant on an individual level to ensure continued success in school, worksites, and the program. ICCC's goal is for each youth participant to feel valued and employable in the future. These services are provided through the use of the Minnesota Youth Program grant funds received directly, and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds from the Northwest Private Industry Council. All activities receive the input and support of our local boards.

BEST PRACTICES

Success in the MYP program has been with the coordination of the Employment Case Managers and all partners involved in the youth participants current situation. The Employment Case Managers work to develop relationships with each youth participant based on individual needs, and takes time to understand each youth participant's situation in order to provide guidance and resources to reduce barriers to employment. The Employment Case Managers are compassionate and strive to create open lines of communication, whether it is visiting the youth at a worksite and encouraging them to continue doing a good job or being there when things become tough. ICCC's goal is for each youth participant to be successful. In rural Minnesota, placing youth in work sites that align with their interests can be difficult. To overcome this, ICCC Case Managers take the time to develop

and maintain relationships with local employers to ensure youth participants receives the best worksite experiences possible. Employment Case Managers provide mentoring to each youth participant at their worksite to ensure they receive the necessary job skills and soft skills to be successful in the future. Local school districts and education providers have been very helpful in sending referrals for students whom they feel can benefit from the programs. This referral system has been very successful for youth who didn't know about the programs and needed additional resources and skill building.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Various agencies collaborate with ICCC to help youth participants achieve personal success. Building these relationships has been a critical part in the MYP program remaining successful. Partners in this collaboration include local schools, social services, public health agencies, courts, probation offices, non-profits, local city organizations, and private businesses.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

ICCC is looking to expand services that will focus on serving diverse populations. ICCC is working with various organizations in East Grand Forks to provide resources to New Americans. ICCC is attending forums, school meetings and social service meetings to provide information about our programs that can be shared with New Americans. With the increase in open jobs and the amount of people retiring, ICCC feel it is vital to build our workforce up to meet the demands of employers. New Americans will need to be integrated into our workforce to help sustain the communities and labor forces. ICCC is working to ensure New Americans have the opportunity to gain work skills and knowledge to grow and become successful in the current job market.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

ICCC works with local schools, area learning centers and adult basic education facilities to focus on career exploration for students. ICCC utilizes funding through MYP to provide presentations and one-on-one services to students for career exploration. During the presentations, students receive information about occupations in demand, cost of tuition for post-secondary training, cost of living, and the importance



of job skills. With one-on-one services, students can explore occupations further and obtain additional information about specific occupations. The one-on-one session can also be used to help develop résumés, fill out job applications, learn interviewing skills and ask any other questions they may have. Students are given the opportunity to take assessments and discover where their strengths and interests lay. From there Case Managers can explain what further training is required to be successful in jobs aligned with those interests.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “I was able to gain additional skills and do something I enjoy.” – *PARTICIPANT*
- “The youth have learned some great skills for the future.” – *WORKSITE SUPERVISOR*

SUCCESS STORY:

Aaron

Aaron had tried to find employment on his own, applying at many of the typical places in northern Minnesota, a gas station, and the local Dairy Queen. He could not make it past the interview portion and struggled to secure employment. Aaron's educational support teacher referred him to Inter-County Community Council to see if a work experience would help Aaron overcome whatever barrier he was facing. Aaron's work experience was with a local veterinarian's office. During his work experience, he received guided practice with interview skills and tips to help him secure his own employment. He also got so much more. Aaron was able to gain hands-on experience into the work of a veterinary technician, a career he was interested in. Aaron is now in his first semester at Vermillion Community College. Because of his work experience, he was immediately admitted to the major, has found mentors at home to assist him while attending post-secondary training, and a base of knowledge to scaffold his learning onto. He knows that his two and a half years of training will lead him to a career that is in-demand, pays well, and most importantly, will bring him a career he will enjoy.



Rural Minnesota

Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program (RMCEP)

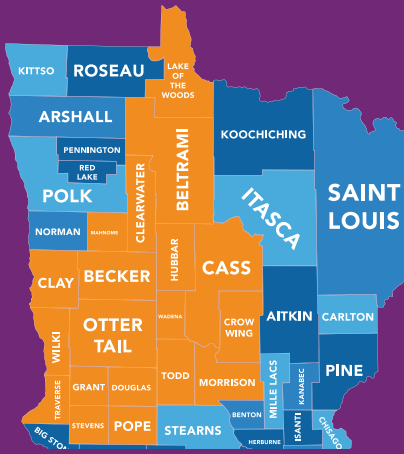
Vicki Leaderbrand, Executive Director

803 Roosevelt Avenue, P.O. Box 1108, Detroit Lakes, MN 56502

Phone: (218) 846-7400

rmcep.com

Area served: Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, Mahanomen, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pop, Stevens, Todd, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin



OVERVIEW

Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Programs (RMCEP) is a non-profit serving 19 counties in WDA2. Our mission, “To inspire positive change leading to successful and prosperous individuals and communities through the power of work” is lived out in partnership with youth, families, and stakeholders. With eight offices spread across mostly rural counties, one that employs a mobile office concept, and one county considered a more “urban” area bordering ND, we are prepared to respond to our communities with broad, diverse brushstrokes.

Youth programs serve participants ages 14 through 24 through person-centered assessments, comprehensive services to build and enhance work skills, and steady guidance to identify and leverage a career pathway unique to each youth. RMCEP’s Youth Council established its 2020 Key Youth Priorities as Resiliency, Financial Literacy, Leadership, Employability Skills, and Career Planning. This year, twenty three RMCEP staff, including Youth Coordinators, participated in Financial Literacy through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) learning valuable tools to assist youth in financial empowerment.

BEST PRACTICES

We have focused our efforts on making sure the youth is confident in the choices they are making. Through assessments and discussions with the youth, they can make choices about their life and know that the choice was theirs to make and best for them. When youth are in job seeking mode, we ensure that they have an updated and professional resume and cover letter. If not, we work with the youth to develop them. We provide support in all areas of their life to provide well-rounded experiences and decision making. We found that by providing tasks and tools to the youth to complete steps is more beneficial to the youth rather than do most of the leg work for them. They become more self-sufficient and confident in themselves to be able to do more than they expected.

Youth Coordinators are using new venues to reach youth participants. Through technology, we have been able to connect in ways we have not in the past. As the world shifted to virtual discussions, so did our counselors who are now using platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meets. Our counselors understand the need to be mobile and flexible; meeting participants where they work or attend school, taking advantage of new technology and social media to maintain timely, valuable contacts.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Our youth success rates would likely be impacted were it not for the collegial network of community partners built over the years. At various locations, RMCEP is co-located with county agencies, Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), and CareerForce which enable us to offer “one stop” services and maximize referrals, as well as find funding for supports outside of the workforce arena.

We serve youth in MFIP families, youth on waivers, and youth involved in foster care or juvenile justice programs. Local partners in our communities run the gamut from schools and ALCs, ABE, mental health providers, crisis centers, Youth Centers for homeless or at-risk populations, and Youth Ministry. Of most significance are our worksites, which provide a setting for youth to “try out” an occupation, learn employability skills, and grow from social exchanges.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR/ YOUTH UNDER-REPRESENTED

RMCEP employs resources and speakers on inclusion and diversity in our professional development opportunities to build staff cultural competencies. Our location is within three Native American Indian Reservations, making a large part of the youth population being served by RMCEP Native Americans. We also serve youth with a variety of disabilities and who come from low-income families. We do our best to make sure they are connected and have the resources they need to succeed. All our youth clients have different needs and we do our best to support them and find the resources needed to help them be successful.

Other underserved youth include homeless or “couch surfing” young adults, youth aging out of foster care, and juvenile offenders. The inter-dependent nature of service providers such as probation, ABE, and local homeless prevention groups, when leveraged to their greatest capacity, can extend programs to hard-to-reach individuals. Finally, youth with a disability represent the fastest growing underserved population which may require more complex or lengthy partnering to make sure all aspects of interventions and supports are available to the participant.



OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS/CAREER ADVISOR COMPONENT

RMCEP has a history of exceptional collaboration with our 62 school districts. Staff connect with school Guidance Counselors, Principals, and Teachers each Spring to notify them of the MYP summer program. Youth Coordinators are recruited as classroom speakers, to participate in career fairs, contribute through Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTIC), and as welcome members at IEP meetings. Using MCIS allows us to share assessments and career exploration activities with schools.

MYP funds can be leveraged to extend the program beyond summer to throughout the school year. An example is outreach to schools through Career Advising which is also funded by HECAP, Sourcewell, and school districts. Eligible MYP participants are considered for enrollment into any of RMCEP's other programs, WIOA Youth Programs, Youthbuild, and TANF Innovations, so continued services and supports can be provided through blending and braiding program funds.

RMCEP had contracts with 23 school districts to provide a full Career Advisor (CA) menu of services. RMCEP continues to expand CA services customizable to a specific school district or community need. WIOA Out of School participants are connected to Adult Basic Education (ABE) to complete a GED, and some drop-out students thrive at ALCs rather than traditional high school settings. We connect students to TRIO/ Accessibility Services, Financial Aid, and Career Services on post-secondary campuses.

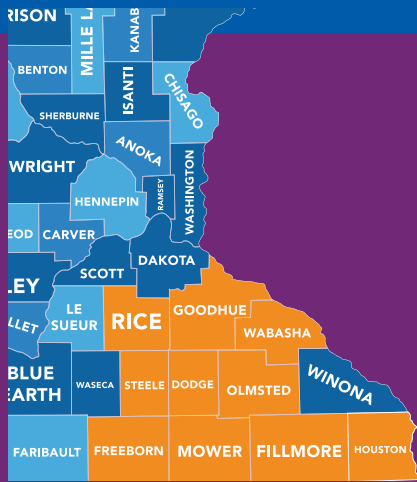
CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “My supervisor has helped me with more than just work skills. She has helped with life skills and decisions.”
– *YOUTH CLIENT*
- “I have seen changes in her confidence and her work since she has been here. I am glad she has had the chance to work on these areas with us.”
– *SITE SUPERVISOR*
- “Logan has never stuck with anything this long. The Radio Station has been a great fit for him. I wish I could pay to have him keep working here he loves it so much and doesn't want it to come to an end. This has been a great experience for him.” – *PARTICIPANT PARENT*

SUCCESS STORY: Maybelle

Maybelle has worked at The Shop since the end of May. The Shop is a local youth center in Brainerd that provides a safe place for youth and includes a free meal every night. Maybelle has been a long-time member of The Shop and Erin, her supervisor, suggested she look into the youth program through RMCEP! She applied to the program right away and is proud of herself for working her first job. Maybelle stated, “My job has changed me a lot since I started, in a good way. I've had a really good time and like the responsibility work brings me.”





Southeast Minnesota

Southeast Minnesota Workforce Development Inc.

Jinny Rietmann, Director

2070 College View Rd E, Rochester, MN 55904

Phone: (507) 292-5152

workforcedevelopmentinc.org

Area served: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, and Wabasha

OVERVIEW

Workforce Development, Inc. is a private, nonprofit organization providing employment and training services to youth and young adults in the 10 counties of Southeastern Minnesota. These services include extensive career counseling, work skills development, career pathways programming, preparation for employment, and hands-on work experiences. Assessments and plan development are completed with individuals involved with the programs to identify interests, aptitudes and education and work goals. Work experiences and career pathways are developed based on these interests and skills. Employers provide mentoring, worksite supervision, and cultural competency training to help youth while they are learning on the job. Counselors, youth and young adults, parents, other youth-serving community organizations and employers work together to ensure a successful work experience and career pathway. Educational goals of completing high school, obtaining a GED or pursuing post-secondary education are also included within an Individual Service Strategy for each youth, and these education goals are braided in their career pathways programming.

BEST PRACTICES

Career Pathways opportunities are the heart of WDI's youth and young adult programming. Several Career Pathways training programs are currently available through WDI, focused on the key sectors in the region including Construction/Trades, Manufacturing, Public Sector jobs, and Manufacturing. One example is our Construction/Trades program where individuals receive 4-8 weeks of training and are often moved directly into a union apprenticeship program. WDI seeks applicants from underserved populations for these programs, including people of color, women and those previously incarcerated.

"Bridges to the Future," is a collaboration between Faribault, Red Wing, and Northfield, including the MN Correctional Facility-Red Wing, and is partially funded through the Youthprise/Social Innovation Fund. This initiative offers career pathways approaches for youth ages 14-24 in those three cities who are in foster care, involved in the juvenile justice system, homeless, or are disconnected from school and work. The primary focus is high school completion with dual enrollment options through partnerships with area higher education institutions and postsecondary training in career clusters that have clear pathways to higher degrees.

WDI also utilizes a multi-tiered career pathways and work readiness program called Emerging Leaders, which collaborates with other community organizations to offer mentoring, independent living skills, while also offering inter-generational work readiness training, career pathways training, and work experience. This program offers opportunities for youth and young adults to gain credentials and real-life work experience.

WDI has been involved with various experiential learning programs throughout Southeast Minnesota. In Freeborn and Mower counties, we are offering apprenticeship opportunities that connect youth with Career Pathways while still in high school or earning their GED. In Houston and Fillmore counties, we have a multi-school/employer collaboration where seven school districts have developed work-based learning opportunities that mirror one another to offer similar ways to connect for employers.

WDI also offers scholarship opportunities to program enrollees who choose to further their education at the post-secondary level. For the fall semester of 2020, seven youth who completed the scholarship application requirements were chosen to receive tuition assistance. These youth are entering a variety of fields of study.

The Youthbuild program is a partnership with Rochester Alternative Learning Center. 10 youth per semester earn school credit and a work experience wage learning the basic skills of carpentry and construction. Their skills are put to use building structures (such as equipment sheds) for local schools and community agencies. Students are co-enrolled in other WDI programming to provide additional support.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

In our youth programming, we find the most success when we collaborate with several agencies and partners. A few of the strong partnerships are those within education: high school principals, counselors and teachers, adult basic education, and community college systems. Those within various nonprofit and government agencies are also strong partners: social workers, mental health providers, YMCA, probation officers, and youth workers within organizations such as the Empowerment Center, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Community Corrections, United Way, Homeless Coalitions, Somalia Rebuild, Red Wing Youth Outreach, the Rochester Link program and the



Rochester Boys and Girls Club. We greatly value the input and participation of youth in all aspects of programming as well. Some of the most important partners are employers, providing real-life work experiences and funding for our career pathways programming, including key stakeholders such as Mayo Clinic, Habitat ReStore, and local trades union partners.

We use a wide variety of funding streams to help support our programs. All of these are vital to help WDI maintain consistent programming. Our MYP funds are often braided into co-enrollments with other programs to better serve our youth, and these programs benefit by receiving additional leverage of these funds. Adult Career Pathways, Youth Support Services, Career Pathways Pilot Program (CP3), Youth Intervention Program, Healthy Transitions, TANF, Youthbuild and Pre-ETS are examples of this. Without the availability of co-enrollment with our multiple funding sources, opportunities for you would be greatly diminished. Being able to diversify our services allows our youth staff to implement more thorough programming, thus providing more benefit to our youth.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

Through the development of our Emerging Leaders program, we have advanced in developing partnerships and coming together with our community organizations to develop a collaborative youth programming model for Southeast Minnesota. WDI currently employs multiple individuals who provide targeted outreach and programming to underrepresented individuals in their specific communities. We continue to make gains in tackling equity in employment for youth of color. Specific to the individuals in our region, Southeast Minnesota demographics represents an overall minority percentage of approximately 13%. MYP currently serves 48% youth of color, and 51% youth with disabilities. Of all individuals served in our programming, 96% of those exited have successfully completed their employment objective.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

Career Planners work closely with schools, providing information to administrators, teachers and students on the services available through youth programming, and we use the Career EdVenture curriculum to provide schools with easy access to a variety of topics and services. We have regular hours at the various schools throughout the 43 districts in our region. Working with school counselors and reaching students through class presentations allows students easy access to employment and education opportunities. Our Youth Career Planners also give group presentations at career-focused school events. Topics include career assessments, teaching essential employment skills, job search techniques, resume writing, interview skills and financial literacy.

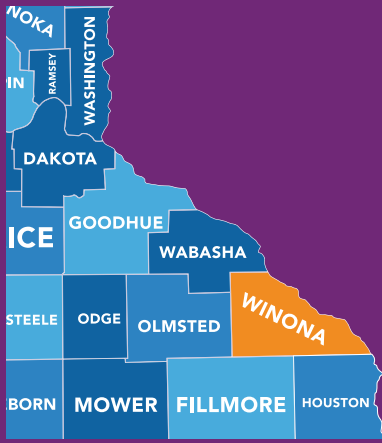
CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “I really appreciate the help WDI gave me. They helped me find a job while I was still in school.”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT
- “This scholarship allows me to attend school. I wouldn’t be able to without it.” – YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT
- “The staff at WDI is always willing to help. They were able to get me clothes for my work”
– YOUTH PARTICIPANT

SUCCESS STORY: Jerrad

Jerrad enrolled in WDI programming while attending the Rochester Alternative Learning Center. During this time, he was involved in the Youthbuild program, a semester-long course designed to teach students the basics of carpentry and construction. Jerrad successfully completed the course and was instrumental in helping construct an equipment shed for use by an area partner. While in school, he also participated in football and has worked at HyVee and Caribou Coffee. In May 2020, Jerrad graduated from the ALC and is currently exploring post-secondary options. He is exploring the fields of law enforcement and forestry. Jerrad is an example of a successful co-enrollment, as he was able to access WDI services through both MYP and Youthbuild.





Winona

Winona County WorkForce Council

Laura Pettersen, Executive Director

1250 Homer Road – Suite 200, Winona, MN 55987

Phone: (507) 205-6060

careerforcemn.com/winona

Area served: Winona

OVERVIEW

Youth programs serve youth (ages 16-24) with various barriers to employment as well as the families of youth, employers and the community at large. Building confidence, soft skills and specific work-related skills are benefits to program participants (besides the paycheck for employed youth). The youth program offers hope to participants and their families. Some youth earn a high school diploma with the help of the programs; they also earn school credit for their work experience.

The program provides local businesses with employees. Local employers gain first-hand experience with a person with barriers, maybe a disability or some legal problems, introducing them to a whole new labor pool. Many employers enjoy the opportunity to mentor and train, to watch the personal growth process of their youth participants. Everyone benefits when someone discovers their “niche,” and begins a career path that is their passion and becomes a contributing member of the local community.

BEST PRACTICES

Work Experience Class is offered at Winona Senior High School for students with disabilities. Youth review information on child labor laws, work site responsibilities, how to keep a job, managing money and safety on the job. Student, Work Experience Teacher, and CareerForce Winona Youth and Young Adult Coordinator work together to find a suitable work site. Once the work site is determined, the student is given responsibilities and duties. The students work four days of the week and one day is spent in the classroom discussing job seeking skills to help youth find their next job. Students create up-to-date resumes and cover letters along with filling out an application for the Youth Work Skills Challenge.

Youth Work Skills Challenge is a day where students of all abilities come together to learn, educate, and compete against one another in real-world work scenarios such as applications, resumes, and interviews. Students can listen to speakers, receive resources, and talk to various agencies focused on life skills and/or opportunities of growth in careers.

This year a pilot was started to have individuals try **teleworking** as part of the work experience, so far this has been a successful endeavor for both the youth and employer. Keys to the success include a dedicated mentor/supervisor who regularly checks in

with the student, clearly outlined work plans and outcomes and identifying student employees who are self-motivated and have access to technology and the internet.

An important part of our program is having youth work in the community with local employers. Before sending a youth into the community to work, staff ensure they are job ready. Indications of this include promptness in returning phone calls, follow through with assignments and timeliness in appointments at the CareerForce Center, and professional presentation at their workplace. We feel the youth gain a deeper appreciation of work readiness through the actual experience of having to be at work on time, follow a supervisor’s instructions, get along with coworkers and all those other work-related soft skills learned on the job. Staff work to provide worksites that are easily accessible to the youth, including both youth in the cities of Winona County and youth in the rural areas.

Youth staff work with students in three school districts (Winona, Lewiston-Altura and St. Charles) throughout the school year. Collaborating with teachers to provide our services as a complement to what is being taught in the work search classroom. For younger participants, staff are working closely with the schools. For older youth, we work with referral sources.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

Outreach to Schools (OTS) Activities in Winona County complement the work of existing school counselors and provide youth and families with career exploration, college information and current labor market information. Examples of Outreach to Schools activities that have been implemented include (but are not limited to):

- Providing information to individuals and groups regarding occupations and industries in demand and with the highest growth throughout the region using current labor market information, which may include providing opportunities for students to directly experience occupations through job shadowing, mentoring and business tours.
- Providing workshops to classes on planning for post-secondary training, including accessing financial aid and selecting an appropriate program, as well as other career



planning topics such as goal setting and navigating business culture.

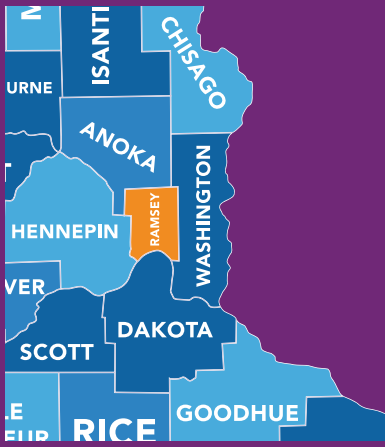
- Tours of the Winona CareerForce Center and information about the resources available at the Winona CareerForce Center and how to access and utilize the resources.
- Connections to community and private sector resources through a local career fair offered in the fall and spring, career events, and tours of businesses in strategic industries.
- Group and individual sessions including instruction and presentations on O'Net, labor market information and strategic industries and in-demand occupations.
- Individualized career development activities including career exploration and career assessments, resume preparation, mock interviews, and job search assistance.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

The Winona Youth and Young Adult Program partners with and utilizes community resources provided by organizations such as REACH, the Chamber, and SEMCIL to coordinate services for area youth. We synchronize our efforts with Vocational Rehabilitation Services and counselors with the MFIP programs to maximize positive outcomes. Partnering through presentations and services for K–12 school systems as well as Minnesota State College Southeast and the Winona State University. Staff also presented information to groups of youth who have been involved with the juvenile justice system.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “We enjoy having the youth help at the Center. We feel that we are helping them learn new skills, which will help them in the future.” —*SUPERVISOR*
- “Working at the Resource Center taught me how to be organized and neat. It was fun to help the clients.” —*YOUTH PARTICIPANT*



Ramsey County

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

Ling Becker, Director

2266 2nd St North, North St. Paul, MN 55109

Phone: (651) 266-9890

careerforcemn.com

Area served: Ramsey

OVERVIEW

Workforce Solutions (WFS) U LEAD (Learn, Earn, Attain, Development) Youth Employment and Training program is guided by Ramsey County's vision of "A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive". This program reflects strategic service delivery that align with the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WFS U LEAD programs are funded by WIOA, the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Innovation Program to provide comprehensive, year-round services, that include exposure to career pathways, to economically disadvantaged youth, ages 14-24, in Ramsey County.

BEST PRACTICES

The services that are delivered through U LEAD include individualized, year-round comprehensive guidance supports (including work experiences, internships, support services, etc.). MYP continues to provide many youth and young adults with work experiences and other entry employment opportunities. Additionally, through use of Support Services, MYP allows youth, who may otherwise have barriers to employment, such as lack of transportation, to successfully complete a work experience.

With the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in March, U LEAD readjusted the service model to ensure youth and young adults continued to get employment and training services, safely. First, all counseling and case management activities were transitioned to phone and virtual service delivery. Second, U LEAD began providing virtual learning opportunities such as Clean Up Your Social Media, Learn More About Starting Your Business, Get Prepared for an Interview, and Take a Virtual College Tour. MYP participants were incentivized to engage in these learning opportunities. Finally, U LEAD worked with local organizations who hosted youth in work experiences and internships, to transition some experiences to virtual and to ensure that additional safety protocols are taken for those youth who continued in person experiences.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Many community and state partners have made the efforts of the U LEAD program successful. Educational partners include

but are not limited to Saint Paul Public Schools, Roseville Area Schools, St. Paul School District Career Connect, Saint Paul College, Century College, City Academy, and Change Inc. Additionally, many employer partners aided in development and support of youth participants, including ISD 622, Ramsey County Libraries, Minnesota Trades Academy, The Sanneh Foundation, Solid Ground, Cookie Cart and many more.

WFS leverages many other resources to support youth and young adults in Ramsey County. These include TANF Youth funds, federal WIOA funds, the Gen Z project through White Bear Lake Schools (a Youth Skills Training program supported by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry), and a partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools. Additionally, the schools that host Outreach to Schools (OTS) interns provide in-kind supports of staff time, office space and space to meet with students.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

As the most racially & ethnically diverse county in Minnesota, Ramsey County WFS focuses many efforts on addressing economic disparities that persist in communities. Using county and state data, WFS strategically plans and delivers youth services to neighborhoods and communities who have historically been under-served by the workforce system. WFS's U LEAD program serves a majority youth and young adults of color. Through direct MYP services (individualized guidance counseling and supports), WFS served 79.62% youth who identified as a race other than "white alone", and 11.85% youth who identified their ethnicity as "Hispanic or Latin(x)". OTS also focused on serving youth of color with post-high school employment and educational planning. In 2019-2020 78% of students served in OTS were students of color.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS/CAREER ADVISOR COMPONENT

Many local students receive supports through the Outreach to Schools (OTS) program, funded by MYP. In the 2019-2020 school year, OTS provided three local high schools with three paid, college-aged, interns to aid the work of school counselors in assisting students with post-high school employment and educational planning. Because of challenges that are presented by Minnesota's extremely high student to counselor ratio, many



students, especially those in disenfranchised communities, often receive very limited post-high school planning. Interns were trained by WFS staff and Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) personnel on the use of labor market information, job seeking skills, resume development and composition, interviewing skills etc. Interns work approximately 5-8 hours per week.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, schools in Minnesota moved to a distance learning model on or before March 27th, 2020. This impacted Outreach to Schools, as all of the schools chose to discontinue the work of the interns at this time. Unfortunately, these last few months of school are when the majority of the post-school planning is done, therefore, the impact of this year's program is somewhat limited.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- "I am extremely grateful for the opportunities and resources that have become available to me over the past year as an intern with High School for Recording Arts. I can wholeheartedly say that I wouldn't have the same confidence as an intellectual, as a student, nor as a professional, had I not had access to this internship. Thank you very much." – *MORGAN W.*



SUCCESS STORY: Morgan

Morgan W., a junior at the High School for Recording Arts, participated in Ramsey County's U LEAD Youth & Young Adult Employment & Training Program in Spring and early Summer 2020. High School for Recording Arts (HSRA) is a unique charter school program in St Paul that serves many students who have not been successful in traditional high schools. Their mission is to "provide youth the opportunity to achieve a high school diploma through the exploration and operation of the music business and other create endeavors."

Prior to connecting with U LEAD, Morgan was active in her school. She loves to sing, play guitar, cook, hike and travel. One of her instructors knew about U LEAD and connected her with a youth counselor. With the help of her counselor, and support from MYP, Morgan attended a week-long Customer Service Training at St Paul College, where she earned and credential, and also participated in a financial literacy training. Following the completion of these two trainings, Morgan began an internship as a student publicist with her school, HSRA. When COVID-19 disrupted school (and everything) in March 2020, Morgan's internship supervisor worked with her, and her youth counselor, to develop a plan for Morgan to continue her work from home and U LEAD assisted in ensuring she had the technology and equipment needed to do that successfully. Morgan said that she really enjoys learning about the business end of the music industry.

Morgan is also currently taking Post-Secondary Opportunity classes through St Paul College's Power of YOU program and hopes to complete her Associate's degree before she graduates high school.

Morgan reports that "My internship with HSRA has been instrumental in developing my educational and professional career. It has allowed me to explore a variety of different possible professions and exposed me to some of my current interests of which I otherwise never would have even thought of. Because of this exposure I have chosen to study communications, which in turn has taught me more not only about the internship but myself as well."

SFY 2020 MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM (MYP) DATA SUMMARY (JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020)

COMBINED WDA TOTALS		TOTAL	PCT	WDA 1 NW	WDA 2 CEP	WDA 3 NE	WDA 4 Duluth	WDA 5 CM,JTS	WDA 6 SW	WDA 7 South Central	WDA 8 SE MN	WDA 9 Henne pin
1. Total Participants Served		2,934		65	191	199	81	196	83	175	400	186
1a. Total Participants Exited		1,538		13	77	47	14	69	32	92	132	121
Gender	2a. Male	1,498	51.1%	39	115	110	38	82	47	84	216	93
	2b. Female	1,429	48.7%	26	76	89	43	114	36	91	184	91
	2c. Did Not Self-Identify	7	0.2%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Age	3a. 14 - 15	963	32.8%	16	64	25	2	28	16	7	31	37
	3b. 16 -17	981	33.4%	30	76	78	26	87	47	92	151	108
	3c. 18	397	13.5%	15	30	65	14	37	13	28	60	33
	3d. 19 - 21	444	15.1%	4	19	26	28	28	5	30	113	7
	3e. 22 - 24	149	5.1%	0	2	5	11	16	2	18	45	1
Ethnicity / Race	4a. Hispanic/Latino	338	11.5%	6	13	6	4	22	23	44	71	19
	4b. American Indian or Alaska Native	85	2.9%	3	21	8	7	3	1	1	7	2
	4c. Asian or Pacific Islander	133	4.5%	0	0	2	1	6	0	0	14	27
	4d. Black or African American	820	27.9%	3	11	1	20	13	5	41	66	89
	4e. White	1,495	51.0%	50	156	178	40	153	74	114	275	57
	4f. Multi Race	178	6.1%	5	3	10	12	6	2	15	32	5
Education Level	5a. Grades K-12 (No Diploma/GED)	2,413	82.2%	64	166	119	60	167	75	133	290	139
	5b. High School graduate or equivalent	421	14.3%	0	24	76	19	19	5	38	84	45
	5c. Post-Secondary Education	99	3.4%	1	1	4	2	10	3	4	25	2
Other Demographics	6. Limited English Proficient	266	9.1%	10	1	0	0	11	0	19	27	4
	7. Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	1,922	65.5%	44	107	122	61	86	42	114	201	129
	8. Foster Youth	127	4.3%	4	15	15	19	16	4	12	10	8
	9. Youth with a Disability	1,343	45.8%	52	138	147	47	128	50	91	212	40
	10. High School Drop-Out	156	5.3%	0	8	7	16	7	2	13	65	2
	11. Offender	191	6.5%	0	15	16	15	10	4	22	65	1
	12. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	155	5.3%	1	1	10	9	13	5	23	59	0
	13. Basic Skills Deficient	793	27.0%	26	142	104	51	129	14	81	55	24
	14. Homeless or Runaway Youth	159	5.4%	0	1	9	24	9	2	11	22	3
	15. Not Employed at Program Enrollment	2,460	83.8%	63	165	130	73	153	67	157	299	120
	PROGRAM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELATED ASSISTANCE											
1. Received Education/ Job Training Activities		1,681	57.3%	55	107	174	41	148	33	175	400	2
2. Received Work Experience Activities		1,789	61.0%	31	162	125	46	80	49	121	150	108
3. Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities		474	16.2%		38		1	15	4	3	37	37
4. Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities		1,620	55.2%	101	137	171	20	196	9	117	400	2
5. Received Mentoring Activities		445	15.2%		66	65	1	1	19	126	22	37
6. Received Support Services		263	9.0%	5	26	6	39	26	3	42	5	2
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE (Based on Number Served)												
1. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS		1,487	96.7%	13	77	47	14	69	32	113	132	121
2. Received Academic/Service Learning Credit		1,166	75.8%	13	2	47	8	66	32	41	132	55
3. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, or Remained in School, Obtained a Certificate or Degree, or Drop-out-Returned to School		1,355	88.1%	11	50	12	10	52	26	78	88	118
4. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, or Military or Entered Employment (Based on Exitors)		364	23.7%	8	38	47	11	38	18	38	103	0
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION												
1. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Excellent"		392	51.0%	15	34	22	19	18	6	23	16	13
2. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Very Good"		302	39.3%	10	28	11	6	5	7	13	7	15
3. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Average"		57	7.4%	1	7	1	1	0	1	3	3	3
4. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Below Average"		6	0.8%	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
5. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Poor"		12	1.6%	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	2
6. Total Number of Surveys Completed		769		27	69	34	26	26	14	40	26	34

SFY 2020 MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM (MYP) DATA SUMMARY (JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020)

WF1 demographic data as of 9/31/2020, Activities and Customer Satisfaction data as of 9/30/2020

COMBINED WDA TOTALS		TOTAL	PCT	WDA 9 Carver	WDA 10 Mpls	WDA 12 Anoka Co.	WDA 14 Dakota Co.	WDA 14 Scott Co.	WDA 15 Ramsey Co.	WDA 16 Washing- ton Co.	WDA 17 Stearns- Benton	WDA 18 Winona Co.	
1. Total Participants Served		2,934		23	501	235	114	11	192	27	236	19	
1a. Total Participants Exited		1,538		20	490	135	67	5	63	21	123	17	
Gender	2a. Male	1,498	51.1%	17	201	122	79	4	109	21	110	11	
	2b. Female	1,429	48.7%	6	296	113	34	7	83	6	126	8	
	2c. Did Not Self-Identify	7	0.2%	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Age	3a. 14 - 15	963	32.8%	4	426	40	35	0	19	12	201	0	
	3b. 16 -17	981	33.4%	15	58	54	25	5	68	10	35	16	
	3c. 18	397	13.5%	3	11	48	10	2	26	1	0	1	
	3d. 19 - 21	444	15.1%	1	6	69	44	3	55	4	0	2	
	3e. 22 - 24	149	5.1%	0	0	24	0	1	24	0	0	0	
Ethnicity / Race	4a. Hispanic/Latino	338	11.5%	3	56	16	11	2	20	0	22	0	
	4b. American Indian or Alaska Native	85	2.9%	0	13	7	1	0	6	1	4	0	
	4c. Asian or Pacific Islander	133	4.5%	0	23	5	6	0	45	1	3	0	
	4d. Black or African American	820	27.9%	2	255	59	10	4	84	5	147	5	
	4e. White	1,495	51.0%	18	39	124	81	5	36	17	65	13	
	4f. Multi Race	178	6.1%	2	35	24	2	1	16	0	7	1	
Education Level	5a. Grades K-12 (No Diploma/GED)	2,413	82.2%	23	487	183	90	9	130	26	235	17	
	5b. High School graduate or equivalent	421	14.3%	0	14	45	1	1	46	1	1	2	
	5c. Post-Secondary Education	99	3.4%	0	0	7	23	1	16	0	0	0	
Other Demographics	6. Limited English Proficient	266	9.1%	0	53	18	1	3	41	0	78	0	
	7. Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	1,922	65.5%	8	476	122	54	8	133	11	186	18	
	8. Foster Youth	127	4.3%	1	3	3	2	0	3	1	6	5	
	9. Youth with a Disability	1,343	45.8%	21	74	132	68	3	62	9	52	17	
	10. High School Drop-Out	156	5.3%	0	1	17	2	0	16	0	0	0	
	11. Offender	191	6.5%	1	4	16	0	1	19	0	0	2	
	12. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	155	5.3%	0	3	13	0	2	15	0	1	0	
	13. Basic Skills Deficient	793	27.0%	1	0	33	19	1	62	0	51	0	
	14. Homeless or Runaway Youth	159	5.4%	0	9	27	5	0	32	0	4	1	
	15. Not Employed at Program Enrollment	2,460	83.8%	23	500	188	75	7	165	26	234	15	
	PROGRAM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELATED ASSISTANCE												
	1. Received Education/ Job Training Activities		1,681	57.3%	0	0	235	0	13	76	0	222	0
2. Received Work Experience Activities		1,789	61.0%	19	495	138	85	5	130	27	0	18	
3. Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities		474	16.2%	0	0	1	85	0	4	27	222	0	
4. Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities		1,620	55.2%	21	5	235	0	5	187	0	0	14	
5. Received Mentoring Activities		445	15.2%	0	0	0	76	0	5	27	0	0	
6. Received Support Services		263	9.0%	3	0	25	0	9	69	0	2	1	
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE (Based on Number Served)													
1. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS		1,487	96.7%	20	490	64	67	5	63	21	123	16	
2. Received Academic/Service Learning Credit		1,166	75.8%	11	490	23	67	4	16	21	123	15	
3. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, or Remained in School, Obtained a Certificate or Degree, or Drop-out-Returned to School		1,355	88.1%	20	489	116	67	5	52	21	123	17	
4. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, or Military or Entered Employment (Based on Exiters)		364	23.7%	0	0	39	0	1	19	0	0	4	
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION													
1. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Excellent"		392	51.0%	5	133	2	12	7	0	4	63	0	
2. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Very Good"		302	39.3%	1	142	0	12	6	0	9	30	0	
3. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Average"		57	7.4%	0	20	1	6	1	0	5	4	0	
4. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Below Average"		6	0.8%	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	
5. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Poor"		12	1.6%	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	
6. Total Number of Surveys Completed		769	0	6	299	3	32	14	0	19	100	0	

Minnesota Youth Program - Return on Investment Information

STATE FISCAL YEARS 2019 & 2020 (JULY 1, 2018 TO JUNE 30, 2020)

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY '19)	WDA DATA	
A. Unduplicated Count of MYP Enrollees	3,384	
B. Total number of MYP termed	2,393	
C. Total number of MYP terminees that returned to school	1,661	
D. Total number of MYP terminees that were placed in jobs	318	
E. Average wage at placement for MYP placements	\$12.28	
F. Average number of hours per week for MYP placements	31	
G. Total number of MYP placed in work experience	2,201	
H. Average wage for those MYP placed in work experience	\$9.65	
I. Average number of hours per week for MYP work experience	37	
J. Total MYP expenses for the program year	\$779,625	
K. Total Annual Wages Earned by MYP Participants	\$11,010,127	
L. Total Government Taxes Paid (est at 26.6%)	\$2,928,694	
M. Est. Welfare Savings on Placements (Avg. \$6835)	\$2,173,530	
N. Total Annual Return to Government	\$5,102,224	
O. Positive Termination Rate	82.7%	
P. Entered Employment Rate	43.4%	
Q. Return on Investment	\$6.54	
Minnesota Youth Program (SFY '20)	WDA DATA	
A. Unduplicated Count of MYP Enrollees	2,934	
B. Total number of MYP termed	1,538	
C. Total number of MYP terminees that returned to school	1,055	
D. Total number of MYP terminees that were placed in jobs	329	
E. Average wage at placement for MYP placements	\$12.20	
F. Average number of hours per week for MYP placements	30	
G. Total number of MYP placed in work experience	1,525	
H. Average wage for those MYP placed in work experience	\$10.00	
I. Average number of hours per week for MYP work experience	35	
J. Total MYP expenses for the program year	\$577,125	
K. Total Annual Wages Earned by MYP Participants	\$9,464,028	
L. Total Government Taxes Paid (est at 26.6%)	\$2,517,431	
M. Est. Welfare Savings on Placements (Avg. \$6835)	\$2,248,715	
N. Total Annual Return to Government	\$4,766,146	
O. Positive Termination Rate	90.0%	
P. Entered Employment Rate	68.1%	
Q. Return on Investment	\$8.26	
Minnesota Youth Program (SFY '18 & '19)	WDA DATA	
A. Unduplicated Count of MYP Enrollees	6,318	
B. Total number of MYP termed	3,931	
C. Total number of MYP terminees that returned to school	2,716	
D. Total number of MYP terminees that were placed in jobs	647	
E. Average wage at placement for MYP placements	\$12.24	
F. Average number of hours per week for MYP placements	30.5	
G. Total number of MYP placed in work experience	3,726	
H. Average wage for those MYP placed in work experience	\$9.83	
I. Average number of hours per week for MYP work experience	36.0	
J. Total MYP expenses for the biennium	\$1,356,750	
K. Total Annual Wages Earned by MYP Participants	\$20,474,155	
L. Total Government Taxes Paid (est at 26.6%)	\$5,446,125	
M. Est. Welfare Savings on Placements (Avg. \$6384)	\$4,422,245	
N. Total Annual Return to Government	\$9,868,370	
K. Positive Termination Rate	85.6%	
L. Entered Employment Rate	53.3%	
M. Return on Investment	\$7.27	

MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM

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