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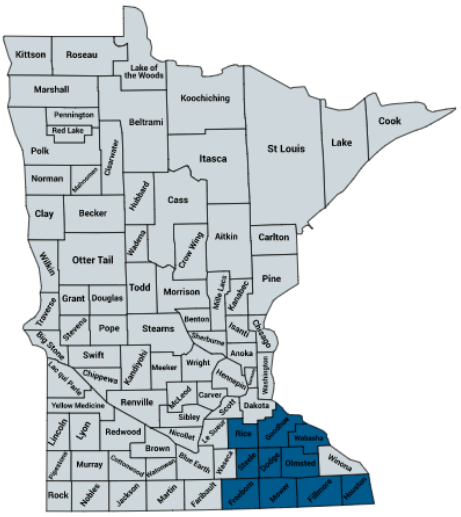
2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Workforce DEVELOPMENT, INC.

The Workforce Development Board of Southeast Minnesota

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) is a community of problem solvers who walk alongside people as they build skills, find stability, and create meaningful careers. We believe in the power of opportunity, and we work every day to open doors so individuals and families in Southeast Minnesota can thrive. We partner with employers to strengthen their workforce, elevate their talent pipelines, and empower them to grow in ways that benefit the entire region.



Our Mission:

To develop and advance the workforce of Southeast Minnesota.

hello@wdimn.org

www.workforcedevelopmentinc.org

Workforce
DEVELOPMENT, INC.
The Workforce Development Board of Southeast Minnesota

2025 IMPACT

$20.72
Per hour, average wage at exit for adults

$17.65
Per hour, average wage at exit for youth

2,400+
Youth Customers Served

5,150+
Adult Customers Served

Participant Testimonial:

"I'm incredibly grateful to Workforce Development Incorporated and to all the donors who make this work possible. Thank you for believing in people like me and for investing in our dreams. I promise to pay it forward in my future as a nurse."

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2025 IMPACT

Best Places to Work Program

2025 BEST places to work SOUTHEAST MINNESOTA

16 Years!

Employer Services

Supporting skill growth, increasing productivity, and reducing the likelihood of layoffs.

387 NEW

Employers Connected & Served

Incumbent Worker Training Program

18	95	25
Businesses Supported	Employees Trained	Training Providers Utilized

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Employer Success Story

"With grant support facilitated through WDI and DEED, Harmony has enhanced skills in departments like HR, engineering, and sales. The training—conducted through a variety of qualified providers—helps employees earn certifications and build marketable skills."

Solutions for Waste & Recycling Harmony™ ENTERPRISES, INC.

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20 LEVELS OF 25 ENGAGEMENT

Support for Individuals

In 2025, we helped youth, adults, and families build careers leading to strong, independent futures—free of charge. With personal support, financial help, and community connections, we help people find opportunities so they can move forward with confidence.

PROGRAM SERVICES

UNIVERSAL SERVICES

Career Exposure

Explore Industries & Occupations

- *Career Data*
- *Access to Job Boards*
- *Networking*
- *Job Fairs*

Career Planning

Plan for Employment

- *Career Data*
- *Assessments*
- *Resume Writing*
- *Interview Practice*

Community Resource Support

Connection & Insights

- *Community Partners*
- *Training Providers*
- *Employers*
- *Resources*

Career Development

Skills to Work Training

- *Short-Term: Certifications & Licenses*
- *Classroom: Diploma & Associates Degree*
- *Work-Based: On-the-Job, Internships & Apprentice*

Financial Support

Assistance with Work-Related Challenges

- *Transportation*
- *Childcare*
- *Housing*
- *Tuition*

Business & Employer Support

This year, we expanded our partnerships with businesses to create strategies that build strong talent pipelines, support employee development, and improve retention. Our approach helps employers save time, reduce hiring costs, and drive sustainable growth.

PROGRAM SERVICES

WALK-IN SERVICES

Hiring Assistance

Access to Available Talent

- *Weekly Job Boards*
- *Hiring/Event Space*
- *Interview Support*

Employee Retention

Business Planning

- *Customized Strategies*
- *Best Places to Work*
- *I/We*

Industry Insights

Connection & Insights

- *Data Insights*
- *Networking*
- *Hiring Best Practices*

Employee Development

Skills to Work Training

- *Short-Term: Certifications & Licenses*
- *Classroom Training*

Work-Based Learning

Assistance with Work-Related Challenges

- *Apprenticeships*
- *Paid Work Experiences*
- *Wage Subsidies*
- *On-the-Job Training*
- *Internships*

Key Accomplishments

FUNDING & FINANCIAL GROWTH

- Secured **$2.4+ million** in new competitive grants and direct appropriations including Agricultural, Southeast Asian Disparities, Bridges to Healthcare, and New Americans
- Reached a **$13.5 million** overall budget, the second highest in WDI history, marking a **3.8%** increase from the prior year
- Successfully managed and maintained **86** active funding streams in 2024

PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

- Delivered Career Pathways programs across all **10** counties, enrolling **543** clients in Career Pathways training
- Implemented River Regions Manufacturing Grants offering Accelerated CNC, Welding, and Manufacturing: 101 training, including programming in Adult Detention Centers
- Developed job seeker materials such as resume, interview practice, and interview tips in East African languages to help bridge communication barriers when assisting East African job seekers
- Created a culturally responsive toolkit for employers and WDI staff to assist East African New Americans navigate the American workforce system

YOUTH SERVICES & EDUCATION

- Engaged more than **2,400** students across Southeast Minnesota through school-based outreach, career exploration and labor market insights. In addition, immersed **584** students in career exploration using the virtual reality headsets and attended **28** high school career fairs across the region
- Earned a **93% above-average rating** from youth and young adult participants surveyed about their experience in the program
- Supported **145** youth and young adults in completing meaningful work experiences that built real-world skills gaining practical skills, professional habits, and resume-ready accomplishments
- Launched **140** youth and young adults into unsubsidized employment with an average starting wage of **$17.65** per hour

COMMUNITY & EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

- Continued our community engagement efforts and expanded use of our Southeast Minnesota Workforce Engagement Toolkit, aligning outreach across key industries including healthcare, manufacturing, IT, and transportation
- Added **87+** new businesses to the CRM in **2025**, for a total of **2,034** business contacts

Visit us on the web!

A message from the Executive Director:

Dear Partners, Friends, and Supporters,

As we close out another transformative year, I find myself reflecting with deep gratitude on the journey we've shared. Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) exists because of people like you: employers, educators, community partners, and supporters who believe in the power of opportunity, the dignity of work, and the potential within every individual we serve.

*This past year was not without its challenges. We faced shifting economic landscapes, fluctuating labor markets, and the continued evolution of state and federal funding streams. Yet these changes pushed us to innovate, strengthen our internal systems, diversify our partnerships, and rethink how to deploy our resources for the greatest impact. Through it all, our team and our community showed what true resilience looks like. Together, we helped over **7,200** individuals take meaningful steps toward stability and success. We placed nearly **1,900** people in living-wage careers, and we celebrated record-breaking achievements in wage growth, performance outcomes, and new community partnerships.*

These numbers tell a story of progress, but they don't capture everything. Behind every statistic is a person: a parent who found a career that supports their family, a young person who discovered a passion for the trades, a business that found the skilled workers they needed to grow. Those stories are what drive us forward.

As we look to the future, WDI's commitment is stronger than ever. We are investing in innovation, expanding career pathways, and deepening our partnerships to meet the evolving needs of both workers and employers. Whether through our Youthbuild programs, our Bridges to Healthcare and Built Environment initiatives, or our growing engagement with digital and green economy training, we are building a workforce system that is inclusive, forward-thinking, and rooted in community.

To every partner who collaborated, every funder who believed in our mission, and every staff member who went the extra mile: thank you. Your support, your trust, and your shared vision for a stronger, more equitable workforce make all the difference. This year reminded us that while economic conditions and funding landscapes may shift, our mission remains steady — and our ability to adapt ensures that no matter the challenge, we continue to deliver meaningful results for the people and communities we serve.

The challenges we faced in 2025 reminded us that this work is never simple, but it is always worth it. Together, we are not only helping people find jobs, we are changing lives, strengthening families, and shaping the future of our region.

With gratitude and optimism,

Jinny Rietmann, Executive Director
Workforce Development, Inc.

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Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities provided, upon request, by calling 507.292.5152 or by using your preferred relay service. Workforce Development, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program Provider and a proud partner of the American Job Center Network.