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**REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE  
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING PROGRAM**

**Minnesota Department of Jobs and Training  
Community Based Services Division  
St. Paul, Minnesota**

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**JANUARY 1993  
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MINNESOTA YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING PROGRAM  
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The Youth Employment and Housing Program demonstrates a commitment to Minnesota's at risk youth and their communities by helping young people to rebuild their neighborhoods and take charge of their lives. The program enables young people to gain useful job skills while working toward their high school diploma or GED, play a respected role in their community, and build the most essential commodity needed by their families and neighbors: affordable housing.

### Funding and Quality Standards

At the state level, the Youth Employment and Housing Program is an integral part of the employment and training programs in the Community Based Services Division of the Minnesota Department of Jobs and Training. These programs are specifically designed to reduce unemployment and poverty in Minnesota. In 1991, the Legislature provided \$200,000 to the Department of Jobs and Training for the Youth Employment and Housing Program. Through a competitive grant and review process, funds were awarded to three organizations: \$80,000 to Bi-County Community Action Council, Inc. in Bemidji, \$40,000 to The City, Inc. in Minneapolis, and \$80,000 to the Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative in Chaska.

The program demonstrates substantial leveraging of additional matching funds through its coordination with other community services organizations, local educational agencies and technical colleges, local construction trade and business people, housing agencies, court services and law enforcement agencies, and drug/alcohol prevention and treatment programs. Matching funds leveraged for the Youth Employment and Housing Program totaled over \$400,000 in 1992.

To ensure quality standards and compliance with state statutes and labor laws, representatives of the Department of Jobs and Training make annual site visits to monitor the programs and provide technical assistance.

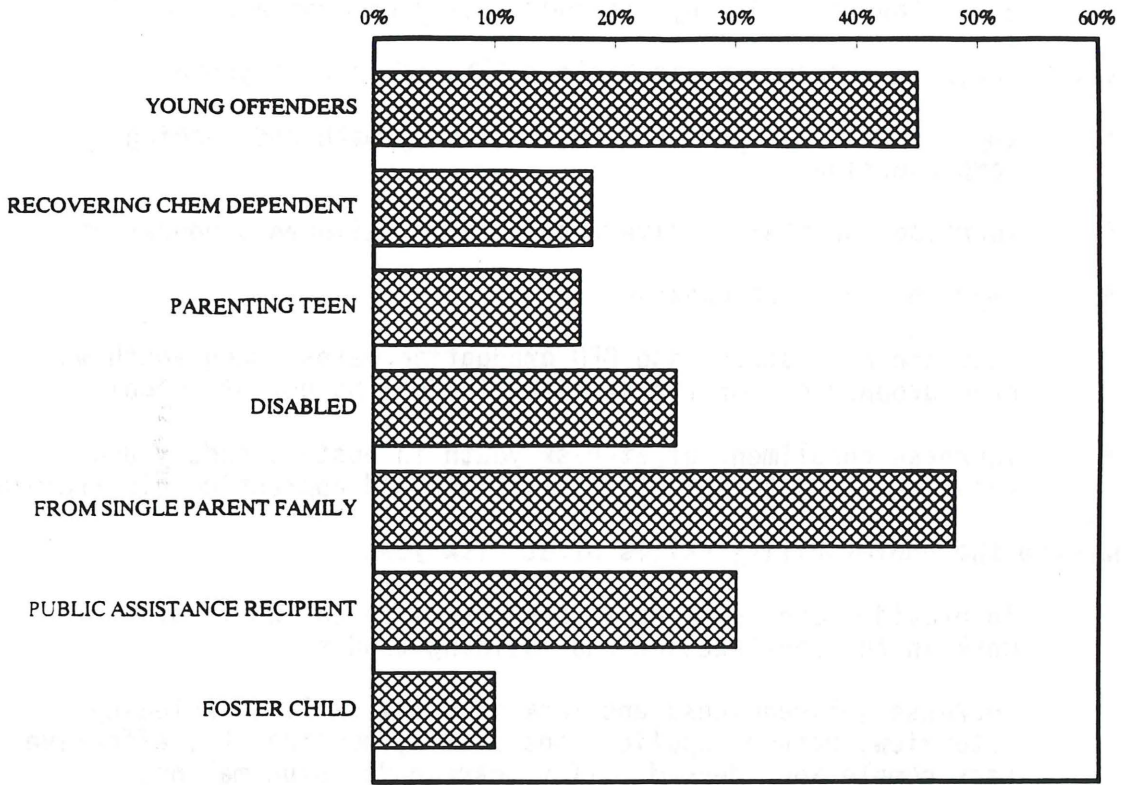
### Community Service Focus

The Youth Employment and Housing Program is an excellent model of youth community service. The program builds self esteem and leadership skills in at-risk youth. Meaningful, necessary, and measurable community service is accomplished through the rebuilding and improvement of neighborhoods and the acquisition of affordable housing for homeless, battered, and very low income families and individuals.

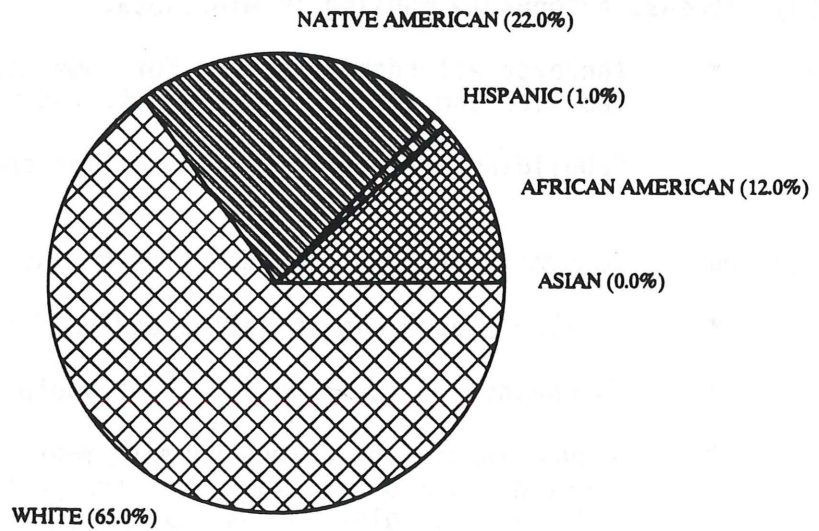
### Program Description

The Youth Employment and Housing Program is expected to serve approximately 150 young people over the eighteen month program cycle and serve an additional 200 homeless, battered women and children, and very low income persons in need of affordable housing. All youth participants are 16 to 21 and have previously dropped out or are at risk for dropping out of school, 45% are juvenile offenders, 25% are youth with disabilities, 18% are recovering chemically dependent youth, 48% come from single parent families, 30% are public assistance recipients, 17% are pregnant or parenting teens, 10% are youth in foster care, and 35% are youth of color.

## PARTICIPANTS AT RISK (%)



## RACIAL/ETHNIC PROFILE



## **Program Objectives**

The objectives of the Youth Employment and Housing Program are four-fold:

### **(1) Increase remedial education and basic skills of at-risk youth:**

- \* Improve academic performance, including math and reading comprehension
- \* Increase parental involvement in their children's education
- \* Improve school attendance
- \* Increase high school and GED graduation rates among youth who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of school
- \* Increase enrollment of at-risk youth in post-secondary and vocational and technical institutions and apprenticeship training

### **(2) Increase the employability skills of at-risk youth:**

- \* To provide young persons with exposure to the world of work in the construction and building trades
- \* Increase job readiness and work maturity skills, including interview, resume, applications skills, punctuality, effective task completion, dependability, career decision making, cooperation, following directions, and positive work attitude
- \* Increase the numbers of young women in non-traditional employment
- \* Increase specialized job skills in construction and the building trades for hard to employ young persons
- \* Increase employment for young persons in the building trades

### **(3) Increase affordable housing in Minnesota:**

- \* Increase affordable housing for homeless and very low income families and individuals and battered women and children
- \* Rebuilding deteriorating communities and neighborhoods

### **(4) Provide Community Service opportunities for at-risk youth:**

- \* Develop leadership abilities and self-esteem of youth
- \* To enhance citizenship skills of youth
- \* Reduce inner city crime, unemployment and deterioration of housing stock by providing at-risk youth with useful job skills and positive roles in the community

**Program Outcomes:**

**88% of the youth returned to or remained in school:**

Bi-CAP	63%
The City, Inc.	96%
CSEC	100%
Total	88%

**70% received academic credit:**

Bi-CAP	75%
The City, Inc.	84%
CSEC	91%
Total	70%

**Average attendance of 91% was achieved:**

Bi-CAP	75%
The City, Inc.	94%
CSEC	89%
Total	91%

**Of the 23 participants who had successfully completed the program during the first nine months:**

- \* 8 became peer mentors for first time youth entering the program
- \* Six enrolled in a vocational technical school or college
- \* 21 entered employment with 2 young persons in the building trades

## **BI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL (BI-CAP) BEMIDJI, MN**

Bi-CAP, Inc. is a private non-profit corporation serving the areas of Beltrami and Cass counties. Bi-County Community Action Program operates the Youth Employment and Housing Program in collaboration with Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program (Rural MN CEP), Cass Lake Area Learning Center, Bemidji Area Learning Center, Bemidji School District and incorporates housing development resources available through the Beltrami County Housing Authority, Bemidji Area Housing Authority, Cass County Housing Authority, Red Lake and Leech Lake Housing Programs, local Community Development Corporations, FmHA, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, and HUD (SAFAH). The project leveraged \$171,789 of private, public, and non-profit funds in addition to the \$80,000 grant from the Department of Jobs and Training.

Bi-CAP and the project partners operated the pilot phase of the Youth Employment and Housing Program from 1989-1991. In September 1991, the project received the Minnesota Community Action Association's "Excellence Award" due to its innovative features and synergistic affects.

### **EDUCATION**

Each student enrolled in Bemidji or Cass Lake Area Learning Center spends approximately four hours each week in the classroom receiving individualized instruction. Educational instruction is available twelve months per year. Teacher-student ratios of 1:1 are maintained during most of the academic encounters. Student teachers and aides are also utilized. The curriculum includes English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Health/Physical Education, Independent Living Skills and World of Work Training. Academic credit is earned at the traditional rate of one credit for every 120 hours of instruction or through the successful completion of individualized learning activity packages. All students are permitted to progress at that rate which best meets their needs.

"If it wasn't for this program I wouldn't be in school. I would have quit. If it wasn't for the raises I get for credits I earn I would blow my school work off. This program has made me realize my goals and that it's time to grow up and make my mark on the world. I'm very happy that I'm able to be in this program." - Jeremy

"The program has helped me develop better working habits." - Christy

"YEAH has encouraged me to return to high school and be able to attend classes at Northwest Technical College at the same time, through the post secondary enrollment options program. I wouldn't have finished high school without this program." - Erica

"It has given me a lot of experience, a chance to meet a lot of nice people, and a sense of self achievement. It helped me survive financially." - Angie

## WORK EXPERIENCE

The work experience component is two tiered. Tier One allows young persons to earn academic credit under three options:

- (1) traditional vocational classes offered by the school district
- (2) enrollment in an Area Technical College
- (3) World of Work and work experience seminars emphasizing job readiness, personal assessment, job search, job application and interview skills, and exposure to various kinds of jobs

Tier Two provides up to two elective credits for job training experience in the building trades industry. A certified vocational Construction Specialist Instructor supervises two crews consisting of four youth per crew. Of the 14 hours each week spent on work experience, four are spent on exploring the world of work, while the remaining 10 hours are spent on the job site. During the summer months, students work 25 hours a week. In addition, the work experience component has received the endorsement of the Bemidji Central Labor Body.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

A self-sufficiency case manager meets with youth every week. Each participant is allotted approximately \$150 to provide crisis intervention services, including child care, transportation, shelter, food, clothing, and medical services. The case manager also assists youth with the development of an Individualized Transition to Employment Plan.

Parental involvement is an important objective of the project. A Project Advisory Committee consisting of parents, youth, case worker and representatives meets quarterly to provide project input, review progress, participate in the evaluation process, and encourage parental involvement.

"The program has helped me stay in school. I know I would have dropped out if I wasn't in this program. I have also learned many useful things on the job, such as sheet rocking, putting on siding, and making stairs, that I'll use in the future." - Terry

"It's a good program because six full hours of classroom would be too much for some kids. This way we can earn money and credits at the same time. I like learning about how to do things on horses. I know how to use all kinds of tools properly." - Janell

## HOUSING

The housing component consists of single family transitional housing and improvement of single family housing for the very low income. During the first twelve months of the program, nine units were complete and 47 tenants have been provided affordable housing. Families placed in rehabbed units under YEAH are referred to Bi-CAP's Self-Sufficiency Program and have developed a family housing plan to independently achieve rental housing on the open market. Families are permitted to occupy a unit up to two years.

## **THE CITY INC. MINNEAPOLIS, MN**

"Pride in the City" is the project name for the Youth Employment and Housing Program in Minneapolis and is a collaborative effort between The City, Inc. and Project for Pride in Living. The City, Inc. is non-profit social service agency located between two central city neighborhoods, Phillips and Powderhorn. Project for Pride in Living is a non-profit organization developing affordable housing in Minneapolis. "Pride in the City" incorporates resources available through The City of Minneapolis, HUD, the Pillsbury Foundation, and Emma B. Howe Foundation. The project leveraged over \$110,000 of private, public, and non-profit funds in addition to the \$40,000 grant it received from the Department of Jobs and Training.

### **EDUCATION**

Each young person enrolled in The City School spends a minimum of 5 hours each day in classroom instruction. Educational instruction is available twelve months per year on a 6 week or hexmester basis. Groups of 4-6 new participants are added to the program every six weeks. Teacher-student ratios of 1:11 as well as teacher aides allow for individualized educational instruction. The curriculum emphasizes basic skill acquisition in Math and English, problem solving, leadership development and a community building mission that provides students with the skills necessary to participate in their community. Each participant may earn up to 1.5 twelve week trimester elective credits for the half-day work experience. Pride in the City participants averaged 94% attendance for the first trimester of the 1992-1993 school year.

"School is the only thing I've got going for me. I'm the only one in my family--even my ma's family--that will graduate. I like the work I'm going with Grant. I'm thinking about doing more school for carpentry." - Frank Big Bear

"I used to never come to school--now, I'm here everyday. The program made me look at school differently." - Raymond Russette

"This program has helped me read measurements. It has helped my attitude--I work better." - Kevin Carr

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Under the supervision of a journeyman carpenter from Project for Pride in Living, youth participants gain specific construction skills training. Each young person spends approximately 15 hours a week in work experience training. Work experience emphasizes a basic understanding of carpentry skills including introduction to tools and their use, parts of the house and their function, how to read a blue print, applied math and measurements. Participants acquire work experience in renovation of housing, (i.e., demolition, rough carpentry, painting, sheet rocking, landscaping) and observe first hand the work of plumbers, electricians, masons, sheet metalers and other building trades professionals. The program is designed to be flexible to meet the individual needs of participating youth. Young persons who have an interest in the

building trades and have acquired carpentry skills may re-enroll in the program for a second 6 weeks.

Elective trimester credit is earned for maintaining 80% attendance or better, gaining competency in work related behaviors and attitudes, and gaining competency in building trades skills. In addition, participants receive a \$1 an hour stipend for hours of work experience completed.

A third component of the program, job readiness skills, prepare young persons for future employment. Critical job behaviors and attitudes are emphasized such as timeliness, following directions, working cooperatively, being prepared and working safely. The job finding and job keeping course provides participating youth with assessments, guidance counseling, and job placement services.

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

The City, Inc. is unique in that it provides a host of on site services in addition to educational training: assessment, individual planning, case management, career counseling, job placement services, individual, group, and family therapy, legal advocacy, recreation and drop-in center programming, a group home for girls, after care and day treatment programs, on-site day care and parenting services.

Parental involvement is also stressed throughout the program. Parents are informed of program developments and their son or daughter's individual progress. Home contact is made with parents to answer any questions they may have, discuss health care concerns, and to encourage parents to contribute to the student's transition to employment plan, tour the work site, and take an active part in program evaluation.

### **HOUSING**

During the first twelve months of the program, 30 units were renovated and approximately sixty tenants are now occupying affordable housing. By upgrading the housing stock in the inner city, the program impacts problems associated with poverty stricken neighborhoods in Minneapolis (i.e., crime, neighborhood deterioration and loss of affordable housing stock).

## CARVER-SCOTT EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVE CHASKA, MN

Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative operates the Youth Employment and Housing Program in collaboration with Scott-Carver-Dakota Community Action Agency, and the Scott and Carver County JTPA. In addition, the program incorporates resources through the local Construction Trades Vocational program and instructors, Hennepin Technical College, County Human Services, Scott County Housing and Rehabilitation Authority, the Department of Rehabilitation Services, Mankato Rehabilitation Center, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, and the Department of Corrections. The project leveraged \$146,565 of private, public, and non-profit funds in addition to the \$80,000 grant it received from the Department of Jobs and Training.

In 1990 and 1991, the Carver-Scott Education Cooperative was selected as a State Department of Education model for the development of applied skills curriculum and outcome based education. Both education delivery concepts are considered critical in effective education/work programs for at-risk youth.

### EDUCATION

Each student spends approximately 30 hours in pre-employment workshops covering work readiness skills and 30 hours of pre-construction training covering specialized job specific skills. The teacher-student ratio of 1:15 is enhanced by the use of peer tutors and teacher aides. High school credit is earned through a curriculum that emphasizes applied math and reading skills. Educational instruction is available twelve months per year as groups of 12-15 youth are added to the program in four month cycles.

Youth participants averaged 89% in overall attendance on housing projects and averaged a 27 point difference from pre- to post test scores on math skills applied to daily work situations:

<u>Student</u>	<u>Pre-test%</u>	<u>Post-test %</u>	<u>% Point Difference</u>
1	78%	94%	+16
2	61%	67%	+6
3	44%	94%	+50
4	17%	61%	+44
5	39%	67%	+28
6	33%	72%	+39
7	61%	78%	+17
8	72%	89%	+17
9	0%	28%	+28
10	55%	83%	+28
11	50%	72%	+22

\* Math scores not applied to work projects averaged an 18 point difference.

### WORK EXPERIENCE

A Construction Trades supervisor assisted by peer mentors provides specific construction skills training to youth participants on the work site. Each young person spends approximately 30 hours a week in work experience training.

Work experience includes problem solving seminars, job readiness, job search, and job application. Development of positive work skills is emphasized at the work site including punctuality, regular attendance, employer/employee relations, positive attitudes and behaviors and completion of tasks.

AFL-CIO speakers and tours of the Hennepin Vocational School/Building Trades program are repeated to new participants every quarter. Participants earn vocational education credits which are accepted as technical college credits at Hennepin Technical College. The project in Scott and Carver counties also emphasizes young women in non traditional careers with over 70% young women participating during the 1992 summer months.

"The biggest thing we've learned is how to work together as a team. We have a lot of communication, so we're not blowing up over problems. There are few jobs for kids where you have to work together. You need to work together or it can't get done." - Allison and Heather

"It's always different and changing every day. When I think of the first unit and what it looked like before we started - cobwebs and spiders and dust - now you could really live in it. It's really nice." - Heather

"My parents didn't think I could do it. That just made me more determined to do the work." - Emily

"Your 'guy' friends can't believe it when you tell them what you're doing. Girls aren't supposed to know how to do this kind of work." - Heather

"The best part is working together to solve problems. We are learning hands-on experiences. On a lot of jobs you do one thing over and over. Here we trade jobs and learn different skills - not just one thing but a variety. Even the same skill is different in different situations. I never thought I would have gotten into a project like this, but I would do it again and recommend it to other kids. I'll use what I've learned." - Allison

### SUPPORT SERVICES

The program utilizes peer support in both the education program and work site. Peers from the regular construction trades program who have progressed farther in training assist participants in the classroom and on the work experience component. Former dropouts who have completed their education and are either in jobs or post secondary education act as peer support group leaders.

Case management is provided jointly by the project coordinator/instructor and JTPA youth worker who assist youth in developing an Individualized Success Plan which impacts the participant's home life and leisure, community, job and job training, and post secondary education.

### HOUSING

During the first twelve months of the program, four historic row houses were renovated to provide affordable housing for very low income and handicapped tenants. The program's next project provides youth an opportunity to renovate a building providing the first battered women's shelter in the Scott-Carver area.

## TOTAL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS CHARACTERISTICS AND OUTCOMES

<b>Total Participants for the first 9 months of 1992</b>	<b>77</b>
Male (%)	75
Female (%)	25
<b>Age (%)</b>	
16-17	84
18-21	16
<b>Educational Status (%)</b>	
In Traditional School	26
In Alternative School	74
Previous School Dropout	53
<b>Race/Ethnic (%)</b>	
White	65
African American	12
Native American/Native Alaskan	22
Hispanic	1
Asian/Pacific Islander	0
<b>At-Risk Indicators (%)</b>	
Young Offender/Ex-Offender	45
Recovering Chemically Dependent	18
Pregnant or Parenting Teen	17
Challenged or Disabled	25
Mental	6
Physical	2
Emotional	14
Learning Disability	13
Foster Child	10
From Single Parent Family	48
Public Assistance Recipient	30
<b>Program Activity (%)</b>	
Remedial Education	52
Classroom Training	100
Work Experience	77
Job Readiness/Search	77
<b>Program Outcomes (%)</b>	
Returned to or Remained in School	88
Received High School or Vo-Tech Credit	70
Completed a Major Level of Education	26
Completed High School or Obtained GED	12
Enrolled in Post Secondary Institution or Vo-Tech	3
Entered Employment	28
<b>Housing Outcomes</b>	
Housing units completed to date	43
Number of tenants housed	111
Homeless tenants housed	21
Battered Women and Families housed	2
Female Headed Households housed	38
Households of Color housed	59
Average income of households housed	\$7,000

**BI-CAP PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS CHARACTERISTICS AND OUTCOMES**

<b>Total Participants</b>	17
Male (%)	70
Female (%)	30
<b>Age (%)</b>	
16-17	94
18-21	6
<b>Educational Status (%)</b>	
In Traditional School	20
In Alternative School	80
Previous School Dropout	53
<b>Race/Ethnic (%)</b>	
White	70
African American	6
Native American/Native Alaskan	18
Hispanic	6
Asian/Pacific Islander	0
<b>At-Risk Indicators (%)</b>	
Young Offender/Ex-Offender	65
Recovering Chemically Dependent	30
Pregnant or Parenting Teen	0
Challenged or Disabled	30
Mental	6
Physical	0
Emotional	12
Learning Disability	12
Foster Child	18
Single Parent Family	47
Public Assistance Recipient	75
<b>Program Activity (%)</b>	
Remedial Education	47
Classroom Training	100
Work Experience	100
Job Readiness/Search	100
<b>Program Outcomes (%)</b>	
Returned to or Remained in School	54
Received High School or Vo-Tech Credit	21
Completed a Major Level of Education	12
Completed High School or Obtained GED	12
Enrolled in Post Secondary Institution or Vo-Tech	12
Entered Employment	30
<b>Housing Outcomes</b>	
Housing units completed to date	9
Number of tenants housed	47
Homeless tenants housed	47
Battered Women and Families housed	2
Female Headed Households housed	8
Households of Color housed	5
Average annual income of households housed	\$7,000

THE CITY, INC. PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS CHARACTERISTICS AND OUTCOMES

<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>25</b>
Male (%)	84
Female (%)	16
<b>Age (%)</b>	
16-17	80
18-21	20
<b>Educational Status (%)</b>	
In Traditional School	0
In Alternative School	100
Previous School Dropout	100
<b>Race/Ethnic (%)</b>	
White	12
African American	32
Native American/Native Alaskan	56
Hispanic	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	0
<b>At-Risk Indicators (%)</b>	
Young Offender/Ex-Offender	60
Pregnant or Parenting Teen	28
Single Parent Family	80
Public Assistance Recipient	80
<b>Program Activity (%)</b>	
Remedial Education	100
Classroom Training	100
Work Experience	100
Job Readiness/Search	100
<b>Program Outcomes (%)</b>	
Returned to or Remained in School	96
Received High School or Vo-Tech Credit	84
Completed a Major Level of Education	20
Completed High School or Obtained GED	20
Enrolled in Post Secondary Institution or Vo-Tech	0
Entered Employment	64
<b>Housing Outcomes</b>	
Housing units completed to date	28
Number of tenants housed	60
Homeless tenants housed	12
Female Headed Households housed	30
Households of Color housed	54
Percentage of households on public assistance (%)	90

CSEC PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS CHARACTERISTICS AND OUTCOMES

<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>35</b>
Male (%)	71
Female (%)	29
<b>Age (%)</b>	
16-17	83
18-21	17
<b>Educational Status (%)</b>	
In Traditional School	57
In Alternative School	43
<b>Race/Ethnic (%)</b>	
White	100
African American	0
Native American/Native Alaskan	0
Hispanic	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	0
<b>At-Risk Indicators (%)</b>	
Young Offender/Ex-Offender	18
Recovering Chemically Dependent	12
Pregnant or Parenting Teen	6
Challenged or Disabled	39
Mental	6
Physical	3
Emotional	15
Learning Disability	15
Foster Child	12
Single Parent Family	9
<b>Program Activity (%)</b>	
Remedial Education	49
Classroom Training	100
Work Experience	49
Job Readiness/Search	49
<b>Program Outcomes (%)</b>	
Returned to or Remained in School	100
Received High School or Vo-Tech Credit	91
Completed a Major Level of Education	52
Completed High School or Obtained GED	6
Enrolled in Post Secondary Institution or Vo-Tech	0
Entered Employment	6
Entered Building Trades Employment	6
<b>Housing Outcomes</b>	
Housing units completed to date	4
Number of tenants housed	4 * families

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE  
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING PROGRAM CONTACT**

Kay Tracy or Nancy Waisanen  
Community-Based Services Division  
Department of Jobs and Training  
390 North Robert Street  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

1-612-296-6064 or toll free at 1-800-456-8519

**Local contact information:**

Ann McGill  
Bi-County Community Action Programs, Inc.  
P.O. Box 579  
Bemidji, MN 56601  
218-751-4631

Jo Ann Schelledy  
The City, Inc.  
1545 E. Lake Street  
Mpls., MN 55407  
612-724-3689

Brenda Urke  
Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative  
401 East 4th Street  
Chaska, MN 55318-2081  
612-368-8807