

# SFY 22 Construction Careers Foundation Direct Appropriation

Final Report

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

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As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report cost approximately $475 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

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## Introduction

The Minnesota State Legislature has appropriated funds since the 2016 Legislative Session to Construction Careers Foundation (CCF) to “provide year-round educational and experiential learning opportunities for teens and young adults under the age of 21 that lead to careers in the construction industry.”

### Legislative Appropriation

Funds for this project for State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2022 were appropriated in [Minnesota Session Laws – 2021, 1st Special Session, Chapter 10, S.F. 9, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 3(q)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2021/1/Session+Law/Chapter/10/). The appropriation provided $375,000 each year for SFY 2022 and SFY 2023. The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is permitted to use five percent of the appropriation to administer the grant, making the amount available to CCF $356,250 for SFY 2022.

## Summary of Objectives Presented in the Work Plan

Construction Careers Foundation is using the DEED funding to accomplish the following objectives through the Construction Careers Pathway (CCP) Initiative as required by the Legislature:

1. Enhance and grow an industry wide marketing campaign targeted to youth and young adults focusing on the depth and breadth of careers within the construction industry.

2. Increase construction industry exposure activities for middle school and high school youth, parents, and counselors to reach a more diverse demographic and broader statewide audience.

3. Increase the number of high schools in Minnesota offering construction classes during the academic year that utilize a Multi-Craft curriculum, thereby exposing participants to a variety of construction trades.

4. Increase the number of summer internship opportunities; and

5. Enhance activities to support graduating seniors/young adults in their efforts to obtain employment in the construction industry and increase the number of young adults employed in the construction industry that reflect Minnesota’s diverse workforce.

The CCP Initiative’s career pathway supports a diverse future workforce and, in doing so, it also supports the Legislature’s commitment to narrowing economic disparities. Students participating in the CCP Initiative earn high school diplomas while concurrently earning construction industry credentials as they participate in real-world learning experiences.

The CCP initiative builds on the experiences and successes of a variety of existing programs while implementing new programming layers. While Construction Careers Foundation (CCF) representatives are involved with many of the CCP Initiative’s activities, to fulfill this effort the CCP Initiative strategic partners include school districts, Minneapolis and St. Paul Building Trades Councils, Apprenticeship Coordinators Association of Minnesota, and Construct Tomorrow. In addition, the CCP Initiative has multiple strategic relationships within the construction industry, labor, community, education, and government sectors. A report describing the activities and strategic partnerships of the CCP initiative can be found on DEED’s [Youth Direct Appropriations](https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/special/direct-appropriations/) webpage.

## Program Activities

Described below is a summary of activities delivered during the grant period October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

**Objective 1: Outreach and Marketing Efforts**

Construction Careers Foundation is being proactive in reaching out to individuals and organizations who work primarily with and among diverse communities and have an equity focus. CCF seeks to use the expertise of these organizations to gain perspective and resources for how to best serve the needs of diverse communities. Through this work, CCF is also identifying and addressing barriers to employment and working collaboratively with partners to provide the best path forward for youth wanting to enter the construction trades.

In partnership with Pocket Hercules and industry stakeholders, emphasis during the past year has been on expanding content on the [Construction Careers website](http://www.constructioncareers.org/) and providing resources for students, teachers, school counselors, and parents.

Social media and electronic communication continues to be an emphasis of the outreach efforts:

* Outreach via social media – YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram
  + Share information on careers in construction
  + Notify young people of application deadlines
  + Connect with partners to share local construction career exploration opportunities
  + Profile real success stories of local construction professionals and apprentices
* Direct notifications on the Construction Trades App
  + Notifications of specific trade application deadlines
  + Updated wage and apprenticeship information
  + Alerts for featured apprenticeship success stories in students’ preferred construction field of interest
  + Publicize local events and apprenticeship open houses
* Monthly educator e-newsletter
  + Apprenticeship deadlines and application information
  + Scholarship deadlines and application information
  + Construction-related events to attend
  + Information on different careers in the trades
  + Ways to connect with Construction Careers Trades Navigator as a resource for students, educators, and parents/guardians
  + Advice from shop and trades educators
  + Real success stories of Minnesota Trades Academy interns, Learn2Build students’ experiences, and Minnesota construction apprentices

Construction Careers Foundation also supports career fair booths and provides flyers and promotional materials to be shared with students and educators.

**Objective 2: Middle School and High School Events**

***Middle School Events – Learn2Build***

Learn2Build provides construction career exposure for middle school youth by offering in-person events and activity kits. The intent of Learn2Build is to introduce middle school youth to construction in a fun and innovative fashion. By offering hands-on opportunities in partnership with schools and youth focused organizations, Learn2Build brings construction trades experiences to young people to expose them to concepts including careers in construction and learning about tools and various job opportunities.

CCF continued to use the youth activity kits that had been developed as an alternative to in-person programming during the pandemic. These kits were designed to help middle school youth practice to correctly use tools while building a project (such as a birdfeeder), learn about various careers in construction, and gain knowledge of the energy and environmental aspects of each trade. While students completed the kits at home during the pandemic, now those kits are used largely in classrooms.

Each kit contained the following:

* Necessary building materials to complete each project
* A selection of hand tools to keep
* Any necessary safety equipment (glasses, masks, gloves)
* Printed directions
* Google classroom downloads

Printed materials are also included with each kit to direct students to trades websites for more career investigation. These materials include:

* Posters featuring Minnesota apprentices of both genders and multiple trades.
* Flyers that direct students to the Construction Careers Foundation’s website.
* Trading cards that feature a related trade, including photos of an apprentice, length of apprenticeship, income projections, benefits and scope of duties for that trade.
* Further information about tools in the kit.

Kits were delivered to the following schools and organizations:

* Brooklyn Park Middle School – 150 youth each received 4 different activity kits
* YWCA – 30 youth each received 4 different activity kits
* Brooklyn Center – 85 youth received a kit
* Osseo Middle School – 32 kits distributed
* Good Neighbor Center – 35 youth each received 5 different kits
* North High School – 10 kits distributed
* Tartan High School – 10 kits distributed
* Freedom School, St. Paul - 75 kits distributed
* YMCA Girls Inc., Minneapolis - 50 kits distributed

Summer in-person Learn2Build activities included:

* A pilot program with Otter Lake Elementary school students with 70 students participating and building bird feeders.
* Four-day summer camp with the St. Paul Public Schools Flipside program where Minnesota Trades Academy (MTA) interns mentored 10 Learn2Build participants and helped them with projects during the camp.
* Three-day summer camp at Dunwoody College in partnership with Dunwoody and YWCA Minneapolis serving 10 middle school students.

***High School Events – Construct Tomorrow***

Construct Tomorrow returned to organizing in-person events for high school youth after pivoting to online resources promoting the trades during the COVID-19 pandemic. Construct Tomorrow events are opportunities for high school youth to participate in activities featuring various construction trades in a career-fair type setting. Youth also receive practical, one-on-one advice from experienced trades professionals and current apprenticeships at the Construct Tomorrow events. Events were held in the following locations:

* St. Cloud
* Duluth
* Rochester
* Mankato
* Minneapolis
* Moorhead
* Eveleth

**Objective 3: Academic Year Curriculum**

Through the CCP Initiative, Construction Careers Foundation promotes the multi-craft curriculum, a nationally recognized, comprehensive apprenticeship readiness training curriculum, and also aims to encourage and support high schools to offer construction curriculum in their classrooms.

During this grant period, CCF enhanced the resources available through the ConstructionCareers.org website for teachers and school counselors in schools that offer construction classes. CCF staff met with representatives from schools who are exploring adding construction classes or creating a construction career pathway in their school. CCF also conducted a survey of teachers currently teaching construction classes to guide the development of additional resources for them.

**Objective 4: Summer Internship**

The Minnesota Trades Academy (MTA) is a paid summer construction internship experience provided with the support of the Apprenticeship Coordinators Association of MN (ACAM), MN Building Trades Councils and employer partners. The goal is to help selected Twin City area high school youth prepare for adulthood through lifelong learning, skill development, and access to well-paid jobs with benefits in the construction industry. MTA offers an Introductory Track (Track I) and an Advanced Track (Track II). In Track I, interns receive an overarching 8-week introduction to construction career opportunities within the building trades industry (carpentry, pipefitting and electrical). Interns are also exposed to industry-related careers such as architecture, surveying, estimating, project management, and design build. Track II provides a 9-week opportunity preparing interns to select a construction career path through union apprenticeship training, construction-related post-secondary tracts, or direct entry into the construction workplace. Throughout the internship program, students visit different apprenticeship training centers where they receive training and supervision from industry experts as they complete projects using both hand and power tools.

During this grant period, CCF had four cohorts of youth participating in MTA, an increase from previous years which were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sixty-five youth were interviewed and 40 selected to participate. Each crew was supervised by a MTA Lead Trainer and a Youth Trainer, who were all high school teachers or individuals with extensive experience in construction.

**Objective 5: Support for Graduating Youth**

Through trades navigation services, CCF worked to support graduating seniors and young adults in their efforts to obtain employment in the construction industry and increase the diversity of young adults employed in the industry. CCF hired a Trades Navigator in 2021 to assist individual students and youth with career planning, working to help students understand the process and steps toward apprenticeship.

The navigator builds relationships with educators, trades union representatives, apprenticeship programs, trades schools and employment partners to provide the best support for youth for career exploration. The navigator builds a mentoring relationship with youth and works with community resources to help those youth with their basic needs and ongoing transition support.

## Grant Outcomes

Described below are highlights for the period of October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

*Outreach and Marketing Efforts*

* The ConstructionCareers.org website attracted nearly 44,000 unique visitors (9 percent growth from previous year).
* The website’s bounce rate (percentage of individuals who land on a page and immediately leave) decreased by 38.6 percent.
* The average duration of a visit to the website was 2 minutes 5 seconds (19.6 percent increase in duration).
* E-newsletter distributed to more than 4,000 Minnesota educators statewide, including information about apprenticeship deadlines, participant success stories, educator insights, and information about scholarships; more than 20 percent of recipients opened the newsletter and more than 6 percent clicked through the links in the newsletter.
* Over 1,100 posts made across Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook with over 47,000 post impressions (number of times posts visible in social media user timelines or feeds).
* Facebook generated 1,500 clicks to CCF website links.

*Middle School Activities*

* Over 500 middle school students received one or more Do-It-Yourself (DIY) activity kits to complete in their classroom or youth program site.
* 92 middle school youth attended in-person events or camps with hands-on learn to build activities.

*High School Activities*

* Over 2,500 high school students attended Construct Tomorrow career exploration events in St. Cloud, Duluth, Rochester, Mankato, Minneapolis, Moorhead and Eveleth.

*Summer Internships*

* Four cohorts totaling 40 youth were enrolled in the Minnesota Trades Academy (MTA) for the paid summer construction internship experience. Sixty-five students applied and interviewed for MTA.
* 22.5 percent of 2022 participants were female.
* 48 percent of participants were non-white.

*Support for Graduating Seniors/Young Adults*

* A Trades Navigator hired in 2021 worked with 52 young people on career planning, understanding the process and steps toward apprenticeship, and connecting them to community resources to assist in their transition to training or employment.
* The Trades Navigator also connected with 150 individuals who inquired about careers in the construction building trades through the ConstructionCareers.org website

## Expenditures

The activities described in this report for the period of October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022 were funded by appropriations for SFY 2022. Final expenditures for the SFY 2022 were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Budget Category | SFY 2022 Budget | SFY 2022 Expenditures | Percent of SFY 2022  Budget Expended |
| Administration | $20,000 | $20,000 | 100% |
| Contracted Services | $109,500 | $109,500 | 100% |
| Direct Services | $226,750 | $226,750 | 100% |
| Total | $356,250 | $356,250 | 100% |