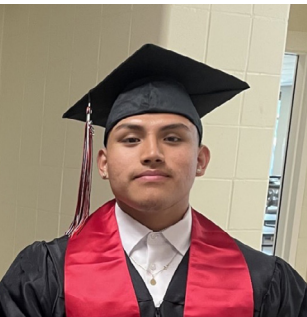




MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM

SFY2023 ANNUAL REPORT



This 2023 Annual Report provides an overview of youth employment and training activities funded under the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) in SFY2023.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Minnesota Youth Program Annual Report SFY2023.	3
WHO IS SERVED BY THE MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM?	3
HOW DOES MYP PREPARE YOUTH FOR THE WORKFORCE?	3
WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY ABOUT WORK EXPERIENCE FOR TEENS?	3
WHAT IS THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) FOR THE MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM (MYP)?	3
HOW ARE MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM SERVICES PROVIDED?	3
SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA	4
SOUTH CENTRAL MINNESOTA	6
CITY OF DULUTH	8
NORTHEAST MINNESOTA.	10
STEARNS-BENTON COUNTIES	12
CENTRAL MINNESOTA	14
ANOKA COUNTY.	16
CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS	18
HENNEPIN COUNTY.	20
CARVER COUNTY	22
DAKOTA COUNTY	24
SCOTT COUNTY.	26
WASHINGTON COUNTY.	28
NORTHWEST MINNESOTA	30
RURAL MINNESOTA	32
SOUTHEAST MINNESOTA.	34
WINONA COUNTY	36
RAMSEY COUNTY.	38
SFY 2023 MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM (MYP) DATA SUMMARY.	40
Minnesota Youth Program - Return on Investment Information	42

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Minnesota Youth Program Annual Report SFY2023

WHO IS SERVED BY THE MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM?

During State Fiscal Year 2023 (SFY2023), 3,766 youth were served through the work experience component of the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) and an additional 32,038 youth were served through the Outreach to Schools/Career Advisor component of MYP. 54% of the youth that were served are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), 40% are youth with disabilities and 61% are youth from families on public assistance.

Program participants are at-risk, low- income youth ages 14 to 24 who lack academic and “applied skills” considered critical for current and future workplace requirements. 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 SFY2023 and outcomes are included in charts at the end of this report.

For SFY 2023 the program was funded with \$4.05 million from the Workforce Development Fund. The 2023 Minnesota Legislature increased funding for SFY 2024 and SFY 2025 to \$8.56 million per year (\$4.05 million from the Workforce Development Fund and \$4.51 million from the General Fund). A proportional increase in the number of participants served is anticipated for the next two years as a result of this additional funding.

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.

Work-Based Learning: Job opportunities in public and private sectors introduce youth to career pathways.

Mentoring: Builds workplace skills, career awareness and confidence.

Financial Literacy: Budgeting and independent living skills developed.

Leadership Skills: Opportunity to work with diverse groups and engage in community service.

Employer Engagement: Employers evaluate work readiness skills of youth in pre and post assessments on the worksite.

Support Services: Transportation, clothing, tools, child care, housing/rental assistance, and school-related financial assistance are available to support participants in work experience.

Credentials/Academic Credit: Youth can earn academic credit, service-learning credit or industry-recognized credentials, degrees and certificates.

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:

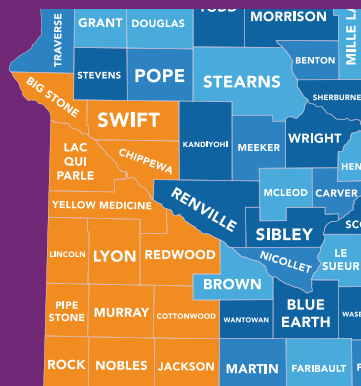
- Contextual learning improves student’s grades, attendance, and graduation rates.
- Young people who have an opportunity to gain work experience as teens are more likely to stay in school, avoid criminal involvement, gang behavior, drugs and unplanned pregnancies.
- Teen employment contributes to significantly 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 an estimated return on investment of \$12.77 for SFY 2023 through taxes paid by participants and other public benefits saved. See ROI chart at the end of this report.

HOW ARE MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM SERVICES PROVIDED?

In SFY 2023, services were provided by 18 grantees throughout the state. A description of each local program is provided on the following pages.



Southwest Minnesota

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC)

Maria Peters, Youth Program Manager

318 9th Street, Worthington MN 56187

Phone: 507-295-5020

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) is a private, nonprofit organization that offers customized training and employment services for individuals and businesses in a 14-county area of Southwest Minnesota. Services are facilitated through three CareerForce locations in Marshall, Montevideo, and Worthington. The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council has been working to build and strengthen tomorrow's workforce since 1985!

Collaborating with employers and educators, the youth and youth adult division assists students and their families with career awareness and exploration activities, career preparation, transition and career advisory services, work-based learning opportunities, support services, employment opportunities, post-secondary scholarships, and career pathway skills training that align with the needs of local employers. Youth and young adults are provided with hands-on "real-life" experiences in the workplace. These experiences are prioritized and emphasized to aid in career preparation and to build a pipeline of future skilled workers in Southwest Minnesota.

PIC leverages other resources, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Youth at Work Competitive Grant Program, Youth Intervention Funds, 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 UNDER-REPRESENTED YOUTH IN THE WORKFORCE

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council continues to partner with the Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU), Southwest West Central Service Cooperative, Southwest Adult Basic Education and Minnesota West Community and Technical College to jointly host a Major Madness event at SMSU in Marshall and Worthington. English Language Learners are able to learn about their options after high school through BIPOC professionals who share their experiences and advice. Students also hear from peers in college about admissions, financial aid, and the college/work experience.

Breaking Traditions has also been an endeavor focused on under-represented youth. In the past year, five different campuses of Minnesota West Community and Technical College hosted an event. These events were very interactive and hands on and highlight programs that lead to in-demand occupations. Highlighted programs included automotive, powerline, electrical, welding, plumbing and heating technology, and wind energy. Breaking Traditions was sponsored by Minnesota West Community and Technical College and the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council. Students from area alternative schools were recruited to attend.

Southwest Minnesota is very diverse and the youth served reflect that with 18% of participants self-reporting a race other than white and 45% self-reporting as Hispanic or Latino.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

As the impact of the work of the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council becomes more and more evident, more community partners join the effort. Some current partners include Southwest Minnesota State University, Southwest West Central Service Cooperative, Southwest Adult Basic Education, Minnesota West Community and Technical College, local high schools, and Area Learning Centers/alternative high schools, local employers, and community leaders.

BEST PRACTICES

The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council provides youth with a variety of work-based learning opportunities as well as career assessment and career exploration services. Youth are guided through the development of employability skills that will prepare them for unsubsidized employment. Youth Employment Specialists work with youth to assess their career interests, strengths and needs. Barriers are identified and addressed so that youth can continue receiving experiential and work-based learning opportunities, focusing on paid internships/work experiences. It is through these experiences that youth acquire not only the skills but also the hands-on experience that will lead to success in the workplace.

Other services that youth receive include business and college program tours, guest speakers from various occupations, career exploration events, job shadows, and mock interviews.

Youth are given the opportunity to learn basic skills and competencies for success in employment through placement into entry level paid work experiences. Some of the basic skills and competencies that they gain are:

- Learning what employers expect and how to meet those expectations,
- Trying different jobs to find the best fit as well as likes and dislikes,
- Providing youth exposure to work, careers, and a professional network.

In addition, work-based learning supports a broader pipeline of workers by connecting businesses to a pool of underrepresented populations. All those involved end up benefiting.

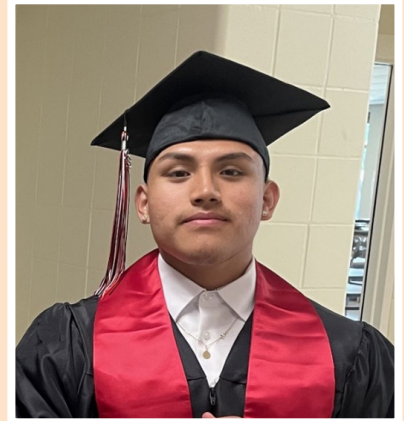
CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “You made a big impact on me by looking hard for me to work at a shop. You made my happiness go up. I finally have a job that I love.”
- “The PIC helped me get a job I really enjoyed and looked forward to working every day.”
- “I learned something new and got to meet new people.”
- “I got to learn a lot of new tips and new roles in life.”



SUCCESS STORY: Alan

Alan was a senior at Worthington High School when he applied with Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council for the welding training. His most recent employment had been as a cashier, and he was seeking a change. Alan was enrolled into the welding training where he was able to earn six college credits, three in welding and three in blueprint reading. Having those credits really benefited him when he decided to enroll at Minnesota West Community and Technical College to complete a one-year program in welding.

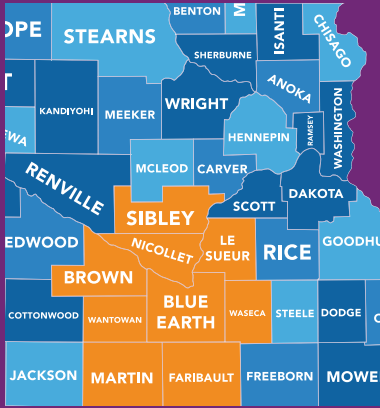


Here's what Alan had to say about his experience:

“This program has helped me by getting my certificate for welding. It has given me opportunities for jobs and also helped me with my college credits. It provides a lot of help for people seeking a good career.”

With his welding certificate that he received with the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Alan was able to obtain employment as a welder at HitchDoc, a certified manufacturer of consumer and industrial products located in Jackson, Minnesota.





South Central Minnesota

South Central Workforce Council/ Minnesota Valley Action Council

Heather Gleason, Executive Director

706 North Victory Drive Mankato, MN 56001

Phone: (507) 345-2418

www.workforcecouncil.org

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

OVERVIEW

Minnesota Valley Action Council (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 BIPOC youth, 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, Rural Career Counseling Coordinator and funding from local partners to support career exploration events. [Careers that Pay: Jasmine's Story](#) video features how young adult programming successfully assisted Jasmine on her career journey.

BEST PRACTICES/SERVING BIPOC YOUTH

The "Dream It. Believe It. Achieve It." Program funded by the Youth At Work Competitive Grant targets services to BIPOC youth. With input from youth participants, parents and representatives from agencies that serve communities of color, key strategies have been successful in reaching BIPOC youth. Because we recognize the strong family connection for BIPOC youth, 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 the BIPOC community 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.

VIRTUAL SERVICES

Traditional methods of providing career exploration, career counseling and work readiness services were pivoted to virtual services during the pandemic. In a post-pandemic world, staff continue to use virtual and in person contact methods to best assist the youth. One example of virtual services being offered is Get Started, a virtual four-week course providing training in the importance of effective workplace communication, budgeting, the impacts of health and wellness on employment and local community resources that are available. Youth received a \$50 stipend for each week of completed assignments, earning up to \$200 over the four-week course. In addition to the topics covered, youth are learning technology skills, dependability, time management skills and building self-confidence through the Get Started course.

Skills for Success provides classroom presentations to high school students on a variety of topics including: career assessments, career planning & exploration, labor market information, job search, work readiness skills, post-secondary planning and financial literacy. In addition to in person presentations, the [Skills for Success video series](#) was developed and offered to local school districts featuring three videos on Skills, Interviewing and Maintaining Employment.

CAREER EVENTS

Area high school students participated in a variety of career exploration events featuring demand occupations in key industries in the area. Over 800 students from 22 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 790 students from 33 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. The South Central Construction Trades Boot Camp offers students an opportunity to further explore different construction trades through interactive hands-on learning projects each session. Around 60 students participated in a three-day SCRUBS Camp which offered an opportunity for students to explore health science professions through hands on activities.

PARTNERS IN CAREER EXPLORATION (PICE)

PICE is a partnership between workforce development and education that places interns in local rural school 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. Interns receive training about CareerForce partners and their services along with labor market information on high growth/demand occupations in the region.

The interns meet 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.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO LABOR MARKET INFOGRAPHICS

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 and social media campaign “Know Before You Go” shares infographics on education and wage range by education level, annual tuition increases, cost of a degree, and demand jobs in the region. Industry specific infographics are available in 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. A monthly [Career Corner](#) newsletter highlights the infographics and demand industries which is shared with school districts.

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

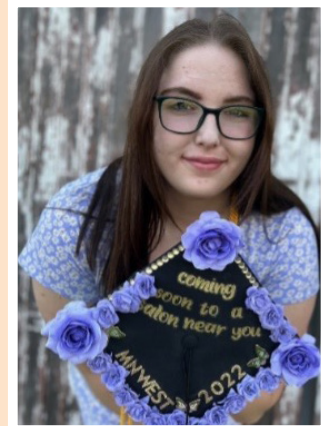
CUSTOMER COMMENTS

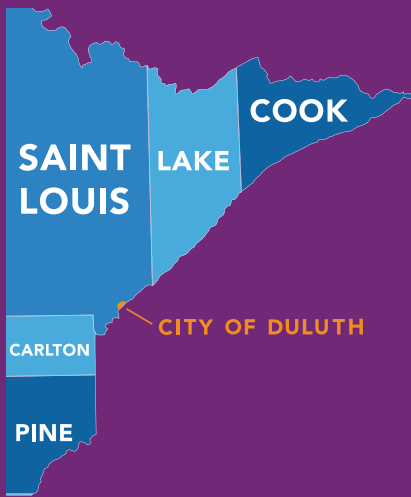
- “The Young Adult Program provided me with opportunities, encouragement, and resources to be successful in my college career. It felt like I always had someone checking in on me and cheering me on to succeed.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “My work experience was beneficial to me because it gave me the confidence to apply, obtain and maintain employment.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “The presentation was interactive and full of different options - There was no ‘you have to follow this path’ or ‘this path will be the most successful’. It acknowledged that every person’s journey will look different and should be individualized.” – *TEACHER THROUGH OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS*
- “I appreciated you for how you were very welcoming and kindly talking to me and making suggestions, which helped me ease my nerves and made the interview process a lot more comfortable. Your expertise helped me provide a better understanding of what employers are looking for, I will use this knowledge to improve my interviewing skills going forward.” – *HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT THROUGH OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS*



SUCCESS STORY: Riley

Riley was referred to MVAC by her school social worker. She was a junior in high school and had goals of attending college and needed resources to assist her in making that dream a reality. Riley’s mom was unemployed, and the family was living with their grandparents. Riley wanted to become a cosmetologist so was placed in a work experience at a salon called Hair Etc. to give her hands on experience and allow her to job shadow to ensure this was the right path for her. Hair Etc. was owned and operated by a former youth participant who had overcome many obstacles to become a successful business owner. She knew the challenges that Riley would be facing because she had already experienced them. Riley graduated from high school in 2021 and enrolled in cosmetology program at MN West in Jackson in the fall of 2021. Riley graduated with high honors in December of 2022, passed her cosmetology license test in April of 2023 and is now renting space at Hair Etc. to start her career. Riley’s enrollment in MVAC’s Young Adult Program gave her the resources to make her dreams come true. Good luck Riley as you begin this new chapter in your life!





City of Duluth

Duluth Workforce Development

Elena Foshay, Director

402 West 1st Street, Duluth, MN 55802

Phone: (218) 730-5241

www.duluthmn.gov/yesduluth

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 Duluth Adult Education (DAE) and Life House 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 the referral network has proven to better reach and serve at-risk youth and young adults. In addition, YES Duluth leverages resources through co-enrollment in grants and programs whenever necessary to best meet 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 a strong network of collaborative partnerships, the agency leverages the strengths and resources provided through 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, staff 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 Holland Code 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. They are also integrating online work readiness assessment and training programs, Conover Company and Pathful, into the 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 the region's current labor market picture.

To develop participants' skills in financial literacy, the program provides a variety of training opportunities and support based on the age, experience and needs of the individual youth. Financial literacy toolkits utilized include CFPB's Your Money, Your Goals toolkit and NEFE's High School Financial Planning Program. Staff also continue to maintain outreach and referrals with community partners that teach financial literacy, including Duluth Adult Education, Community Action Duluth, and Lutheran Social Services.

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 staff, Duluth Adult Education, Life House, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, SOAR Career Solutions, YWCA, Valley Youth Center, Family Freedom Center, 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 the pool of employers that provide work experiences and experiential learning opportunities to participants. When establishing relationships with local businesses, staff strive for a balance of LMI-based employer connections and person-centered employment options. To better serve youth and the community, YES Duluth is currently working with the local workforce board's Emerging Workforce Committee to expand the employer base and explore new options to facilitate

engagement between youth and community employers. Part of this work includes utilizing tools and resources from the Diversity and Inclusion Employer Action Guide, <https://duluthmn.gov/media/12991/di-employer-action-guide-final.pdf>, while developing or renewing worksites.

YES Duluth utilizes Minnesota Youth Program funding to leverage and enhance services offered through WIOA Title I Youth and MFIP programs, 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 Healthy Alliances Matter for All, Family Freedom Center, Community Action Duluth, Human Development Center, Duluth Public Library, and additional ISD 709 staff.

YES Duluth counselors make every effort to meet youth where they are at, including where staff connect with youth, and how staff connect with youth. Meetings and outreach occur in public spaces where youth gather, in community-based youth serving agencies, in the participant's home, school or workplace. Participants have the option of meeting in person, on the phone or through a video call, with the option of completing documents and updates virtually or electronically when faced with barriers such as transportation, child care or tight work schedules. These changes were made to adapt to youth's needs during the pandemic and the agency will maintain this model as a positive change for the benefit of current and future participants.

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, Duluth Back to School Event/Unity in the Community, Touring of Manufacturing, Discover Healthcare, Pathways to Careers, and job fairs and mock interviewing 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 the Area Learning Center and Harbor City International Charter school. 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 the goal is to engage youth in education, employment and other program elements before they disconnect from the school system.

YES Duluth has collaborated with the Denfeld Community School Collaborative 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.

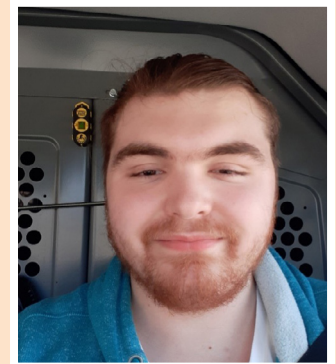
CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “We appreciate YES Duluth’s kind support in enabling the youth’s engagement with our program. The youth are hardworking, innovative and a joy.” – *WORKSITE SUPERVISOR*
- “I really appreciated the one-on-one help from my job counselor!” – *PARTICIPANT*
- “It was great to earn a paycheck and I loved working with the program.” – *PARTICIPANT*



SUCCESS STORY: Laylin

Laylin enrolled in YES Duluth in the spring of 2023. They had first heard of YES Duluth when they were younger but was reminded of it when they saw an ad for GED support in the Community Education flyer. Laylin did not complete their high school diploma and struggled with finding a job that was enjoyable and still fit their skills. Laylin’s YES Duluth counselor connected them with the GED teacher at Life House, where they quickly made progress on earning the GED. YES Duluth also provided services and resources for job search preparation, resume development, and interview skills. Laylin earned a paid stipend for attending work readiness workshops through SOAR Careers, as well as working towards the GED.

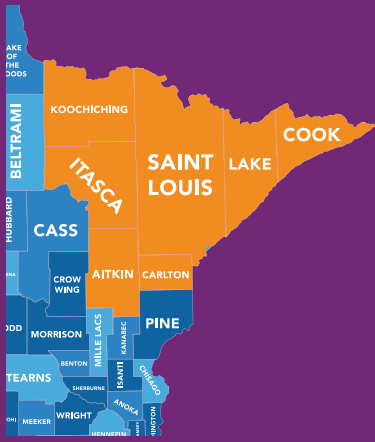


Laylin passed all four GED tests in July, well before their original goal. Having the GED and the additional work readiness skills helped open up more career opportunities they could apply for and help find what they wanted.

Laylin has now started a position with the Geek Squad at Best Buy. They are using their new income to start building credit to purchase their own vehicle. They are also planning on starting an IT program at a local college in Fall of 2024.

To others that may be facing some of the same challenges, Laylin says, “Let the YES Duluth program, CareerForce, and their resources help you find a job that fits you, as well as your needs.”

We are proud of your accomplishments, Laylin!



Northeast Minnesota

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (JET)

Marie Domiano, Executive Director
 820 North 9th Street – Suite 240
 P.O. Box 1028, Virginia, MN 55792
 Phone: (218) 748-2200
nemojt.org

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

OVERVIEW

Northeast Career EdVenture -powered by JET is the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) 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 developed over the years. While some districts have robust career planning resources to guide students, 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 the region can select resources needed for their students. As Career EdVenture matures as a JET program collaborative, partnerships have been developed to increase services to youth and school districts in and outside of the services area to the benefit of the Northeast region. The 2022-23 program year marked the first year since the advent of COVID-19 and subsequent return to in-person learning where JET programming resembled pre-pandemic services with some added enhancements. JET OTS serves nearly 3000 youth and parents directly and several thousand more indirectly.

Career EdVenture 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). Services are not targeted to any specific at-risk population through the schools but are used to educate and assist enrolled 'at risk' participants in the youth programs. In some cases, resources are delivered by request to unique groups such as special education students or groups traditionally underserved in the region such as Free-At-Last foster care groups or in Alternative Learning Programs.

JET, through its programming, has assisted with the challenges faced by current employers finding workers and meeting a defined need brought forth by Minnesota Governor Walz to address the staffing needs in health care. A good example of exposing youth to careers in health care was achieved with the Iron Range Area SCRUBS Camp providing a multi-day event to explore multiple careers in healthcare at Minnesota North College – Hibbing. 218Trades is another example meeting a potential shortfall of workers in the northeast region by creating

and promoting an initiative to make youth aware of careers in the trades, and to demystify the process of trade union joint apprenticeships. Both forementioned areas are proposed in the Minnesota WIOA State Plan and current DWA-3 Workforce Development Regional Plan.

OTS services are geared to help students understand the opportunities available to them in the world of work. For example, a 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. Business and industry speakers from high demand industries serve as classroom speakers to provide insight into career opportunities from a local perspective. Financial literacy workshops are offered in partnership with the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency. JET recognizes that financial planning is necessary to understand what constitutes a living wage and viable future career, and can set into motion a process of financial planning for post-secondary to minimize or eliminate student debt.

Numerous resources help students identify and explore high growth industries and in-demand occupations, including a 2-part Career Exploration series that makes 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 related training programs. Several worksheets engage students in understanding high-demand, high-wage occupations, such as 'Job – What Do They Pay?', 'Myth Buster Career Planning' quiz, and the 'Where Would I Go To...' worksheet to help students determine where to find reputable sources of information on in-demand occupations. JET staff teach self-advocacy skills to help youth gain a voice to speak up for themselves, aid in their decision-making process, understand their rights and identify how and where to go to get and receive help.

BEST PRACTICES AND HIGHLIGHTS

To assess and improve the quality of JET youth services, JET utilized surveying tools via Microsoft Teams for individual and group OTS. The Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) tool relies on youth evaluations for meaningful outcomes and provides youth with tools such as a reflection for self-evaluation. The tool also gathers feedback about the overall effectiveness of JET's OTS services.

JET is participating with CareerForce partners, regional educators, businesses and community-based organizations to become Employer Champions to demonstrate and advocate for hiring and engagement of underserved and BIPOC populations. Many working with the Employer Champions initiative are MYP partnering agencies and educators.

Career EdVenture included several events that engaged larger groups throughout northeast Minnesota. 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 JET is an integral part in the delivery of 218Trades information designed to assist students and parents to understand careers in the crafts and trades. Construct Tomorrow is a hands-on event for high school students to introduce them to the skilled trades in tandem with the JET regional initiative 218-Trades. A unique “hands-on” Career Fair was convened at the Aitkin High School fall of 2022 and was coordinated and supported by JET OTS efforts engaging multiple school districts and serving over 500 students.

Career EdVenture activities across the region involve field trips to the local CareerForce Sites, post-secondary institutions, business & industry tours and career camps such as JET’s four-day summer Iron Range EmpowHER Girls in the Trades Camp. All events and services share career resources. The activities mentioned provide an overview for high school students of partners and services available to them for their entire time/lifetime in the workforce. A Minnesotaworks.net and CareerForce training and registration activity was built into youth activities.

A desire to reengage and attend in-person events and activities following the COVID-19 pandemic has been noted by JET counselors, from students, educators, and parents. Many have noted a gap in personal behavior and soft-skills needed for employment and for proper social interactions. JET has been front and center in delivering in-person offerings and ramped up efforts to provide additional support to events. Notable in-person offerings included: Construct Tomorrow north and south events, The Discover Center Science & Engineering Festival, Minnesota North Technical days across several campuses, Iron Range Job Fair, Cloquet Area Community Black Bear Job fair, Future Foresters event, SCRUBS Health Care Career Camp, EmpowHER Girls in the Trades camp, and 218Trades Joint Apprenticeship training centers visits. Many of the technologies and processes that arose from the pandemic have been adapted and taken hold as common place practices for education, hiring, and working. Staff have created content to share with students via a YouTube channel and directly from the JET/NEMOJT website to better educate the current and emerging workforce, many of those now being youth and young adults. As the educational and work landscape continues to evolve post-COVID, JET provides supports to enhance students’ technology needs and offset expenses to meet the demands of on-line learning by providing items such as webcams, support services for internet or referrals

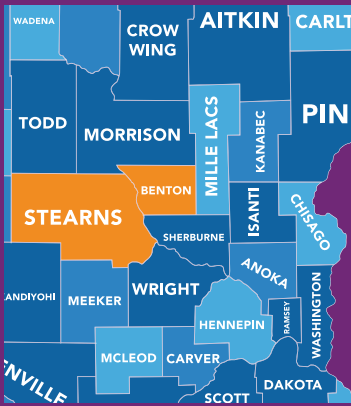
to resources such as PC’s For People. A value of Career EdVenture that goes above and beyond the normal career offerings is the sense of community JET counselors bring to those in isolated and changing learning environments.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

JET takes pride in working collaboratively with partner agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) as part of comprehensive efforts by JET to reach all students in a school district. This often occurs with blended activities from various resources as appropriate such as Perkins funding, Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) and Applied Learning Institute (ALI). Integration of service delivery allows JET staff 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 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), MYP and Youth at Work programming. JET supports access to programming and events by administering a regional Career Exploration (CEX) fund supported by IRRRB to serve communities in the Taconite Relief Area (TRA) with financial supports to offset transportation costs and substitute teacher costs allowing schools to participate in career enhancing events and educational site tours in northeast Minnesota. Aside from blending WIOA and Rural Career Counselor (RC3) resources JET leverages in-kind support and financial support such as CEX from community partners.

JET counselors continue to have an on-campus presence at most regional technical and community colleges. JET staff can be found at Fond-du-Lac Tribal and Community College, and Lake Superior College as well as on campuses that comprise the Minnesota North System in the Grand Rapids, Ely, International Falls, Hibbing, Eveleth, and Virginia, MN communities. These efforts provide a bridge from secondary to post-secondary education with the most up to date information on careers, programming, and access to resources.





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) 266-5060

www.mn.gov/deed/stcloud

Counties 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 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, 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 2023, CareerONE had a 94% completion rate. Of those who completed, 77% received employability skills and 99% 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; SCANSkill activities; 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 and 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, dress code, teamwork, cooperation, 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 earned include the Career Solutions Employability Skills Certificate, Career

Solutions Safety Certificate Youth at Work Talking Safety Certificate of Completion and a FDIC Money Smart Certificate of Completion. Other portfolio items include a resume, master application and career plan.

For the sixth year, CareerONE offered the HealthCare Track where students could obtain 2.5 college credits by taking a CPR/First Aid Class and course #1 of the Health Care Core Curriculum class. For the fifth year, the Manufacturing and Construction Track offered students opportunities to learn about construction, 3D printing, workplace safety, and earn their OSHA 10 certification. For the second year, the Early Childhood Education track provided training on human development, behavior management, inclusive learning environments, relationship building, and professional behavior. Students completed a course called "Managing the Physical & Social Environment". The course is provided by the St. Cloud Technical & Community College and students could earn three college credits for completing. This year a Public Safety track was added and students could earn 1 college credit for completing an introduction to Criminal Justice course that was provided by Alexandria Technical & Community College.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

CentraCare, United Way of Central Minnesota, and other local sponsors partner with CareerONE providing additional funding and work-based learning projects. The CentraCare staff and CEO also participated in career information sessions instructing participants about professions in the health care system. CentraCare employees also provided mock interviews for students through their virtual interviewing program 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 with classroom space, computer labs, transportation, etc.

STRATEGY FOR SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

In the summer of 2023, CareerONE’s population consisted of 73% 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 the creation of 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 the program consistently has a waiting list.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

From 7/1/2022-6/30/2023, Career Solutions OTS provided 711 students with a positive career planning experience. Services were provided in person to 5 area schools and others were assisted with virtual interview and career planning classes. The school districts served were very appreciative of the assistance provided to the students with their career planning needs, which assures compliance with the World’s Best Workforce legislation requirements.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “The best part of this program is learning about my future in an engaging way.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “This summer, I have developed skills as a team player and developed more confidence. I have also learned to be brave even if it is something new, even if it is something you have never done or like doing.” – *STUDENT, ST. CLOUD AREA CAREERONE*
- “I learned that there are so many contributing factors that go into having a well operated team. A big part of that is doing fun activities to loosen up and see how well you and your team work together. I now understand my teammates more and it fostered a sense of community among our team members.” – *STUDENT, ST. CLOUD AREA CareerONE*



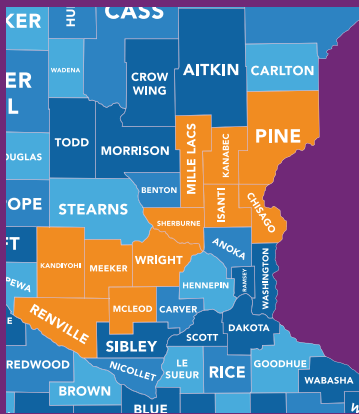
SUCCESS STORY: Jay

“Hello! My name is Jay, and this is my success story. I first learned about CareerOne in 9th grade from my adviser, James Turner. Since I didn’t have anything going on that summer of 2022, it piqued my interest, and so I looked into it further. I can definitely say I don’t regret doing so because the program taught me so much in such a short time. The first few days were a little awkward since there were a lot of people I didn’t know, but once I started up a conversation, I felt more at ease and made some pretty good friends because of it. Through the program, I learned some amazing skills such as leadership, teamwork, communication, adaptability, and even interview skills. Let me tell you, that mock interview made me really nervous but gave me a sense of accomplishment at the same time.



Some parts of the program did not excite me, but once you get past that, you dive into the really exciting stuff, and for me, that was welding and construction work. Although there were some aspects of the program that I wasn’t a huge fan of, I learned to accept them because we don’t always get what we want, and this program really shows you that in dealing with people or activities every day.

I’m really glad I had the chance to take part in this program as both a youth participant and a youth mentor. It provided me with a lot of skills that I can’t wait to use in my daily life and future jobs, especially learning how to create a resume and how to act and dress in an interview. I hope I can encourage others to take this program so they can benefit from the same experiences and have as much fun as I did.”



Central Minnesota

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc.

Diana Ristamaki, Youth Program Manager

406 East 7th Street, P.O. Box 720

Monticello, MN 55362

Phone: 320-364-0321

cmjts.org

Counties 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, the CMJTS goal is to assist youth to 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, and 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.

CMJTS leverages MYP funds through co-enrollments with the 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.

BEST PRACTICES

Leadership Development

Helping 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.

Operation Exploration (OE) Camps

Youth from diverse communities are provided the opportunity to challenge themselves, gain knowledge, enhance skills, and strengthen communities through five innovative two-week hands-on career exploration camps. This initiative targeted youth with disabilities, youth of color, and/or homeless youth that are economically-disadvantaged and/or at-risk. Operation

Exploration offered a unique opportunity for youth to learn about exciting, high-demand, well-paying careers in their area through hands-on career pathway projects, business presentations/business tours, development of career success skills, and classroom instruction. The focus was on in-demand career pathways such as healthcare, trades, automotive, manufacturing, welding, or other sectors in which labor market indicators show a need for skilled workers.

Camps provided training in employability skills, team building, leadership development, financial literacy, resume writing, job application preparation, interviewing practice, CPR credential, and career exploration. Participants received coaching and guidance toward general career development. This opportunity truly gave youth the ability to “try on” careers while they are making decisions about their future! After the Operation Exploration camp, based on individual needs, youth participated in a work-based learning experience, service-learning project, and/or credentialed training.

Youth with Disabilities

CMJTS has years of experience working with youth with disabilities. In 2023, 68% of participants served identified as having a disability. Recruiting is accomplished through targeted outreach to partner organizations that work directly with this population. Serving youth with disabilities and helping them become successful is essential to CMJTS' mission. Efforts are enhanced through a partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). CMJTS is 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. This provides an opportunity for 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.

Serving Youth of Color

Operation Exploration - CMJTS hosted a week-long interactive camp for Indigenous youth in the Mille Lacs Band Ojibwe Ge-Niigaanizijig program. Youth were provided hands-on experiences to gain exposure to careers in the activities each day with the featured trade: carpenters, cement masons, electricians, bricklayers, and operating construction trades, and learned about union apprenticeship training opportunities. Youth engaged in hands-on learning with engineers.

PathFinders (Finding Your Right Path) – A partnership with the MNYou Youth Garden in Willmar provides exposure and career exploration in agricultural careers to youth of color in Kandiyohi and McLeod counties. This project helps to reduce food insecurities for low-income families by allowing youth to work in the gardens and greenhouse. During their time in the program, youth are taught how to grow, manage, and sell a wide variety of vegetables. The overall goal is to empower minority youth through education, work experience, and exposure to local entrepreneurs.

“For many youth who speak English as a second language, it may be difficult to find summer jobs and partnering with CMJTS has broadened the different careers the youth can explore. The partnership with CMJTS has brought youth to MNYou who may have never thought about agriculture jobs, but after working on the farm are open to exploring ag careers. One positive impact that CMJTS has contributed to is exposing youth from communities of color to the agriculture field. Many youth come from families that do not have a farming background, and for many youth this is the first time they have grown anything. One MNYou participant in the last year was the first Karen student to attend the Ag Business program at Ridgewater, and he chose this career field after learning on the farm for two seasons. CMJTS has been an awesome transition for youth when they are done with our program. If youth want to continue to explore other careers, attend college, or find a job, CMJTS staff have been an excellent support for youth as they transition into other areas of employment or education.” – MNYou Youth Garden Staff

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS (OTS)

CMJTS is currently partnering with more than 52 organizations and/or schools throughout its 11-county region to provide career counseling services to youth and their families 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, and businesses, connections to community resources, and career success skills preparation.

In addition, staff are connected to the local Perkins Consortium and other local agencies/businesses to partner regularly on in-demand career pathways activities, including Construct Tomorrow, IGNITE, 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. This past year, CMJTS served 5,521 youth and 594 families for a total of 6,115 through OTS efforts.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Partnerships play a key role in the success of CMJTS' MYP program. Partners included local secondary schools and alternative learning centers, colleges/training vendors, 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, Big Ideas USA, Perkins consortiums, Mille

Lacs Band Ojibwe Ge-Niigaanizijig, Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council, Local 633 JATC Training Center, Minneapolis Electrical JATC, IBEW Local Union 292, IUOE Local 49, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters, Fair Contracting Foundation of Minnesota, Legacy 2 Inspire, community action agencies, and other community-based organizations.

COMMENTS

- “CMJTS has helped me learn how to talk to people. I still wouldn't have a job if it wasn't for them for I wouldn't know how to talk to employers.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “The program is amazing, I love being able to help my community.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “CMJTS has helped me with a work experience, getting school credit, and finding a job. Overall, just a great company to work with.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*



SUCCESS STORY: Seann

“Hello, my name is Seann. I am 18 years old, and I live in Clearwater, Minnesota. I just graduated from Annandale High School in May 2023. I heard about Central Minnesota Jobs Training and Services (CMJTS) when Jodi came into my work release class to talk about career exploration and work experience. At the time, I was most interested in getting help to find a job in the trades. My career interest is to work as a diesel mechanic as I enjoy working on heavy-duty trucks.

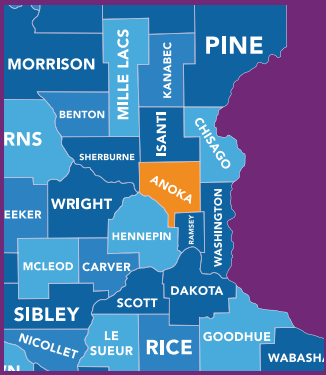


CMJTS was able to help me get a paid work experience at Blaine Brothers in Clearwater. I had applied there myself but couldn't get my foot in the door. Jodi, my CMJTS career navigator, was determined to get me a work experience in my field. I appreciate that Jodi got me a work experience at Blaine Brothers, as it was my number one place that I wanted to work at in my future.

CMJTS was able to keep me on the work experience until I turned 18 years old and became eligible for regular employment at Blaine Brothers. CMJTS was able to make the transition from my work experience to getting hired easy. My work experience built the bridge to my desired job, which I am very appreciative of. I am now a regular full-time employee at Blaine Brothers and make \$25/hour.

I started at St. Cloud Technical and Community College in August 2023 for the Heavy Truck Technician (Diesel Mechanic) program and will go to school in the morning and work at Blaine Brothers in the afternoon and evening. I wasn't considering going on to more schooling until my work experience teacher, Mrs. Swanson, and Jodi encouraged me and assisted me to obtain scholarships to continue my education. This will also help me increase my future wages in the diesel mechanic field.

I appreciate the help that I have gotten from Jodi and the CMJTS Youth Program and I would recommend the program to others to help them get started on a career path for their future.”



Anoka County

Anoka County Job Training Center

Nicole Swanson, Director
1201 89th Ave NE – Suite 235
Blaine, MN 55434
Phone: (763) 324-2300
www.anokacounty.us/JTC
Area served: Anoka County

OVERVIEW

Anoka County Job Training Center's (JTC) Empowers program provides year-round services to eligible youth ages 14-24 in Anoka County. The county leverages and braids funding from various sources such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), Youth at Work, federal financial aid resources, Pathways to Prosperity, and local Anoka County Community Action Funds to serve youth and assist with support services such as transportation.

Young adults served include those from economically disadvantaged families and/or who are receiving public assistance, those who are not in school, experiencing homelessness, aging out of foster care, high school dropouts, unemployed or underemployed, teen parents, youth who do not speak English as their primary language, youth with disabilities, youth connected to the juvenile justice system and those with other barriers that make them at-risk youth as defined by program policies. A variety of career services are provided including assessments and goal setting, assistance with completing high school/GED and/or obtaining an in-demand industry recognized credential, career counseling, postsecondary planning, work experience/internships, financial literacy, job search and/or job placement assistance and follow-up services.

BEST PRACTICES

Empowers utilizes a hybrid service delivery model, offering both in person and virtual services.

CNA partnership with Fridley High School: The Empowers program is partnering with Fridley High School Leadership staff and Pine Technical College to support students that are completing their Certified Nursing Assistant Training while also completing high school credits starting in the fall of 2023. A health lab has been built on site at the high school and they have secured an instructor, through a partnership with Pine Technical College, that is licensed for both high school and college level instruction in this field. Anoka County staff will support these youth and assist with job placement upon completion of the training.

Connecting Virtually: An online inquiry system (recognized statewide as a best practice) is utilized giving interested youth the chance to connect with our counseling team (dubbed the Admissions or A Team) to receive individual basic career services or information on programs or other community resource referrals. For those deemed possibly eligible for

specific programs, the counselors connect people to intake staff right away. This system gets new applicants connected to a counselor the same day, greatly decreasing the time it takes to enroll a new youth applicant into the program.

Safe and Meaningful Work Experiences: 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.

Internships: Youth that have some past work experience and a well-defined pathway are offered an internship. The internships are hosted by a variety of local employers and align with a specific pathway. The internships vary in length, offer a higher wage, and boost their skill sets and exposure to more aspects of the pathway or overall business model. Some excellent examples of current internships include students working with the Medical Examiner's Office, Columbia Heights Police Department, and the Fridley Fire Department.

Project Focus: The agency has a new project managed by its MFIP team called Project Focus (Family Opportunity through Coordinated and Unduplicated Services) that started in 2022. This effort provides resources to families who are granted certain forms of humanitarian protection status to help them build, achieve, and maintain self-sufficiency through a network of supports. The project comes from the Department of Human Service's Refugee Resettlement Office. Families receive a personal counselor for the entire family and the Youth staff work with closely with this project counselor to coordinate individualized efforts to reach out to these families and let them know about available programs and services.

Financial Education: Youth are often new to financial matters when starting a paid work experience. The Anoka County team has created tip sheets and organized them by topic on the Empowers website so that youth can access the information on demand at any time. This resource can be used by new, existing, and past participants.

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:

- **Big Ideas Hiring Event at the National Sport Center:** Collaboration with Metro North Chamber, the JTC and Anoka Technical College/Anoka-Ramsey Community College with over 30 vendors including two Big Ideas trailers and multiple employers. Employers offered hands on experiences in the parking lot from Class A Leasing, the Fire Department and the National Sports Center highlighting their career opportunities with several machines they operate.
- **Columbia Heights Teen Hiring Event at a local library:** JTC staff reached out to local employers who hire youth in the communities surrounding the southern end of the county which is much more diverse. Nine employers attended the event trying to fill positions.
- **Columbia Heights Post-Secondary Fair for Limited English Proficient Families:** Columbia Heights Public Schools has a large group of students who speak Spanish and Somali. Staff highlighted opportunities for students and how Anoka JTC supports first generation, immigrant, BIPOC and/or low-income students, including Project Focus. Over 120 people attended and the school provided student interpreters at each table to assist each vendor in communicating with the families.
- **8th Grade Day at Anoka Ramsey Community College and Anoka Technical College:** Staff presented to over 300 8th graders on both campuses with an introduction to Career Planning and Youth Services and an Introduction to Budgeting.
- Virtual or in person workshops at schools and other community partner locations covering topics of planning for post-secondary training, accessing financial aid, budgeting, selecting an appropriate training/college program and goal setting.
- Providing opportunities to interact with local business through in-person tours, business and industry speaker panels, job shadowing, and mentoring. During October's Manufacturing Month, staff assist in coordinating manufacturing tours.
- 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.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

The current partnership network includes Anoka County Economic Assistance and Social Services Departments, the YMCA, Perkins/CTE-Oakland Consortium, local high schools and alternative learning centers, Hope4Youth (the local youth homeless drop-in center) and Hope Place (transitional housing for homeless youth), Metro North Adult Basic Education (ABE), Minnesota Family Investment (MFIP) and

Diversionsary Work Programs (DWP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Anoka Technical College (ATC), Anoka Ramsey Community College (ARCC), Job Corps and Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS).

Additionally, Empowers staff maintain regular communication with representatives from the Anoka County Social Services Department's Foster Care Unit, Juvenile Corrections, Stepping Stone Emergency Shelter, and 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 AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

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 access to a counselor/advocate that specializes in culturally specific services to African American and/or Native American individuals receiving MFIP.
- Partnering with Vocational Rehabilitation through our Pre-ETS programing has increased our overall outreach to young people with disabilities.
- Of the 180 youth that were served through MYP during the last program year, 53% were youth of color.
- This program year, of the 180 youth served in MYP, 55% of them had a disability.



SUCCESS STORIES: Nik

Nik was 16 years old when he applied for the Empowers Young Adult program in July 2020. He was enrolled into the Minnesota Youth Program and Youth at Work program while an employment counselor assisted him in finding an internship in the automotive field. Throughout his time in the Empowers program Nik was supported in three paid internships at Coon Rapids Service, PTL Tire & Auto, and Blatz Auto working as an Automotive Technician Intern. Through his internship opportunities Nik was able to obtain numerous skills, knowledge and demonstrate his outstanding work ethic. Nik was officially hired for a part-time position at Blatz Auto in August 2021, all while still attending high school.

Nik graduated high school from HERO homeschooling and earned his diploma in May 2022, along with college credits through the Post-Secondary Enrollment Option at Crown College. Prior to high school graduation, Nik's career counselor helped him with career exploration to discover his career path of interest. He determined his dream job would be to become an Automotive Fabricated Welder for specialty vehicles. In August 2022, Nik entered Anoka Technical College and was enrolled into Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programming. He successfully completed the 40-hour Gas Metal Arc Welding training and passed two American Welding Society certification tests in May 2023. With the extra supports Nik received such as internship work boots, welding tools, tuition and books assistance, and certification exam costs, he was able to concentrate on school and achieving his goals.

Nik is now 19 years old and recently accepted a position in May 2023 at Crysteel Truck Equipment working full-time as a Truck Upfit Technician and Installer. Nik is now fixing vehicles both with his welding and mechanic skills. Nik started at \$12 an hour at his first internship and after much hard work in completing his education goals and gaining work experience, he is now making \$23 an hour. Congratulations Nik on all your success!



City of Minneapolis

Minneapolis Employment and Training

Deb Bahr-Helgen, Director

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Minneapolis, MN 55415

Phone: (612) 673-6226

www.minneapolismn.gov

Area served: City of Minneapolis

OVERVIEW

Step Up prepares today's youth for tomorrow's careers by recruiting, preparing, and placing young people (ages 14-21) in paid work and training experiences. This year, 1,220 young people worked with 96 employers representing small businesses, Fortune 500 companies, public agencies, and nonprofits. As one of the region's leading youth employment programs, Step Up leverages a collective of 200 partners spanning 15 industries and multiple sectors. It's a backbone of support that unites businesses, schools, community-based organizations, 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 31,000 internships since 2003, building a competitive talent pipeline and supporting a stronger economy along.

Building a highly skilled and diverse workforce starts with programs like Step Up supporting youth with access to quality education, training and work experiences. Ninety-two percent of Step Up interns are people of color, and 51 percent come from immigrant families who bring a wealth of language and cultural diversity to the workforce and community.

BEST PRACTICES

Work Readiness: All Step Up interns complete work readiness training in the spring which prepares them to have a successful work experience in a professional setting. Pre-internship training is offered fully online and youth can complete it when their busy schedules allow. The curriculum has been developed to be engaging, accessible, and relevant. Of the 2,575 youth invited to training, 2,010 (78%) completed orientation, and 1,455 completed all training required to be prepared for a paid summer experience.

Career Exploration and Industry Exposure: Step Up training includes modules that allow youth to explore a variety of careers that help them determine which industries and job types they want to pursue during their summer experience

and beyond. Many youth in Step Up gravitate toward the careers they see in daily life including healthcare, education, and STEM. Step Up helps youth learn about some of the career options they may not be considering such as arts, transportation, green/outdoor, public safety, and finance.

After youth learn about and explore career options – including the short-term and long-term industry outlooks, wages, and education required - they select their internship preferences. Their internship helps them gain practical experience and learn what it may be like to work in that career field.

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, including Achieve Twin Cities, Project for Pride in Living, and CareerForce Minneapolis.

SERVING UNDERREPRESENTED YOUTH

Step Up extensively recruits youth in all the large high schools in Minneapolis. The team also recruits in several charter and alternative schools to reach more underrepresented youth. Additionally, 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 to continue to innovate and improve the program to better serve the youth and community. This year, even with the challenges of many internships being remote or hybrid, 85% of supervisors still reported that their Step Up intern made a valuable contribution to their workplace, and 83% 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.

- Overall, Step Up interns rated their experience 4.3 out of 5 stars!
- 92% of Step Up Interns reported that they felt like they made a valuable contribution to the employer/organization and 85% of supervisors felt like their interns made a valuable contribution.
- 86% of Step Up interns reported that because of their engagement with Step Up, “I can name at least two people I can ask for a professional reference.”

SAMPLE COMMENTS FROM SUPERVISORS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT THEY MOST ENJOYED ABOUT BEING A STEP UP SUPERVISOR:

- “I always enjoy being able to watch the interns grow throughout the summer and watch them become more confident in their abilities.”
- “Watching the interns adapt, grow, and learn in a corporate environment (which was a new experience for all of them).”
- “We have done this for years, and we enjoy seeing youth grow and develop even in just a few weeks.”
- “Getting the much-needed perspective from the youth on how to improve my job!”

SAMPLE COMMENTS FROM INTERNS WHEN ASKED WHAT THEY ENJOYED ABOUT THEIR STEP UP EXPERIENCE:

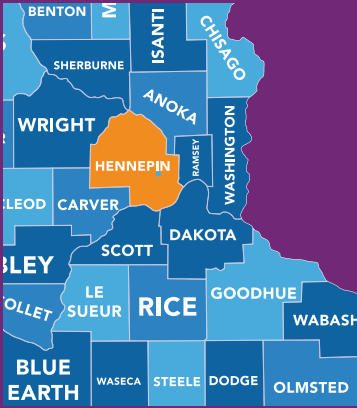
- “I really enjoyed Step Up and it definitely helped me learn a lot of skills and job experience that I had not had before! And overall I had a really good experience.”
- “I had a great time working and I can’t wait to do it again.”
- “Step up does a good job at trying to match internship opportunities to your interests.”
- “My job experience helped open up future jobs I hadn’t considered before my job.”



SUCCESS STORY: Harmony

Spotlight on Step Up Interns at Green Garden Bakery

Harmony (pictured) and Von are high school students who live in the Heritage Park neighborhood and interned with Step Up employer Green Garden Bakery this summer. While both joined to earn money and learn about working in the real world, they have important connections to the Step Up program. Von’s sister was a former Step Up intern, and Harmony’s counselor recommended she consider the program. Their daily work included helping to grow, prepare, and bake the vegetables from the youth-maintained garden into delicious vegetable-based desserts. The desserts are then sold to local community members and at farmers’ markets. In fact, all of the staff of Green Garden Bakery live in the Heritage Park community and the CEO himself is only 17! With the support of a parent organization and employer partner, Urban Strategies, he has masterfully cultivated a thriving, influential business. Both Harmony and Von mentioned that their work is a lot of fun, and though they did not expect they would be gardening, they have embraced that part of the job as well as learning about nutrition, managing a business, and food preparation. They recommend that any future interns who want to get involved should take advantage of the opportunity to gain professional experience and give back to the community. Step Up was proud to serve Green Garden bakery items at their end of Summer Showcase!



Hennepin County

Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Area

Erik Aamoth, Director

Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board

A-400 Government Center | 300 South Sixth Street

Minneapolis, MN 55487

Phone: 763-258-3002

www.hennepin.us

Area served: Hennepin County (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 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 Hennepin County Summer Youth Employment and Training program continues to address the needs of 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. The work done by Hennepin County providers addresses racial disparities in employment and income and opens up new opportunities to a new generation of skilled workers in a wide range of industries. Hennepin County selected Tree Trust, BrookLynk, and Ka Joog as MYP providers to ensure that youth receive early exposure to experiential employment, culturally responsive services, and key supports that pave the way for future success in the workplace.

Brooklynk

Brooklynk provides work readiness training and paid work experiences to youth and young adults ages 14-24 who live and/or attend school in Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, or surrounding suburbs and face barriers to employment. BrookLynk's summer internships are offered for 6-10 weeks during June – August and introduce youth to a variety of professional career opportunities across industries and sectors such as education, government, healthcare, human services/non-profit and more. Participants also receive ongoing employment skills training, one-on-one job coaching, and networking opportunities through the BrookLynk Alumni Network. In 2023, 96 youth were matched to summer internships.

Ka Joog

Ka Joog provides culturally responsive, individualized workforce development opportunities for East African youth to acquire marketable skills, certifications, and other credentials that meet employer requirements for high-demand professions in Minnesota. Using various assessment tools paired with individual case management services, the program helps youth identify their job interests and begin to formulate a

long-term vision for their careers. Ka Joog helps participants identify appropriate internship placements that match their career goals and skill set. Career Specialists meet with each participant to review existing internship placements and explore new partnerships with businesses and organizations in the community to meet the unique career interests of each participant.

Tree Trust

Tree Trust provides paid, hands-on work opportunities for youth ages 14-21 who face barriers to employment. Tree Trust's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is held each summer for nine weeks from June – August, providing entry-level work experience and employment skills training in a supportive team environment. In 2023, 31 youth worked on Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crews in local parks and green spaces.

Youth Conservation Corps Crews – The YCC crews worked on various outdoor environmental projects, beautifying community green spaces, practicing teamwork, and learning invaluable workplace skills. In 2023, two Hennepin County crews completed projects at Westwood Hills Nature Center in St. Louis Park and the Brooklyn Park park system. Youth honed technical skills in landscaping and outdoor construction by practicing proper hand tool use, identifying and removing invasive plant species, observing job site safety and correct use of personal protective equipment, and mastering construction math. The Westwood Hills Nature Center crew rebuilt a boardwalk to improve pedestrian safety and worked to restore a drainage bed. The youth crew installed horseshoe playing fields in Brooklyn Park, cleared a new walking trail, and completed projects to preserve natural resources at the Brooklyn Park Historical Farm. Through these outdoor activities and with the support of Tree Trust job coaches, crew participants developed transferrable workplace skills, such as writing a resume, understanding workplace expectations, effective communication skills, and handling a paycheck. At the end-of-program celebration, the YCC participants shared their accomplishments with family, friends, and other supporters. Crew leaders recounted how crews melded as a team and recognized individuals for their mastery of technical skills, teammate encouragement, problem-solving, and growth in interacting with others.

BEST PRACTICES

Program Design – Many young people in Hennepin County face barriers to employment and self-sufficiency. These barriers may result from systemic or generational poverty, systemic racism, lack of effective education, uncertain childcare, homelessness, transportation obstacles, chemical dependency, justice involvement, or mental health concerns. By offering hands-on employment training, Tree Trust provides an opportunity for young people to develop practical life skills in a safe, supportive context. The projects provide an alternative learning option for youth who may struggle in traditional classroom settings. At the end of this year's programming, multiple parents/guardians commented on the positive effects they had seen in their youth. Crew leaders nominated youth for certificates from Governor Walz to recognize their outstanding growth in leadership, skill attainment, and teamwork.

Ka Joog Nonprofit Organization was added to the roster of Hennepin County MYP providers in SFY 2023, bringing their cultural understanding of East African youth. They also bring relationships with schools and programming that provides training and internships in technology-based industries.

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. Employers for BrookLynk commit to paying 100% of the youth wages and demonstrate a proven commitment to the community and workforce development. In SFY 2023, BrookLynk has continued to foster these important employer relationships and develop more opportunities for the youth they serve.

Certifications and Academic Credit – Tree Trust's Summer Youth Employment Program participants can earn a Tree Trust Certificate to track their professional development and use it as a building block for future career advancement. This certificate is modeled on industry-recognized credentials and includes Worksite Safety, Employability, Tool Identification, and Environmental Stewardship modules. Youth can also earn high school credit through the Northeast Metro Area Learning Center by participating in SYEP. In SFY 2023, 27 Hennepin County youth achieved Tree Trust certificates, and 25 received academic credits.

Community Collaboration – Tree Trust recognizes the strengths that individuals and organizations contribute to transforming lives and landscapes in our community. They have well-established partnerships with like-minded organizations throughout the Twin Cities to provide SYEP participants with the best possible resources. In Hennepin County, these partnerships include: Karen Organization of Minnesota, Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners, Bridge for Youth, 180 Degrees, CAPI USA, Minneapolis Community & Technical College, BlueSky Online School, Robbinsdale Armstrong High School, Robbinsdale Virtual Academy, Richfield High School, John F. Kennedy High School, Jefferson High School, SouthWest Metro Intermediate District 288, and Transitional Education Service Alternative Program. Tree Trust collaborates with these partners for program referrals, participant support services, internships, and employment opportunities.

SERVING UNDERREPRESENTED YOUTH

Recruitment for the program focused on areas of racial and/or economic disparity. Tree Trust fostered relationships with educational partners, libraries, youth outreach centers, and culturally specific organizations to engage underrepresented youth. Crew leaders received diversity, equity, and inclusion training to enhance the knowledge and awareness of staff to create safe environments. 90% of participants were BIPOC, 80% came from low-income families, and 50% identified as having a disability.

With the addition of Ka Joog, an organization with deep connections and relationships within the local East African community, as a local provider more East African youth are able to receive culturally responsive services and work with, receive mentorship from, and develop their skills with leaders and staff that reflect their lived experiences.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

YCC participants are given both formal and informal opportunities to lead within their crews. After the program's second week, Crew Leaders chose one member of each crew to receive a promotion to become the Assistant Crew Leader. Assistants take on extra responsibilities, such as overseeing tool inventories or leading a small group of participants in a project. In 2023, four participants stepped up as Assistant Crew Leaders to work with the Crew Leader to motivate and mentor crews of 8 youth.

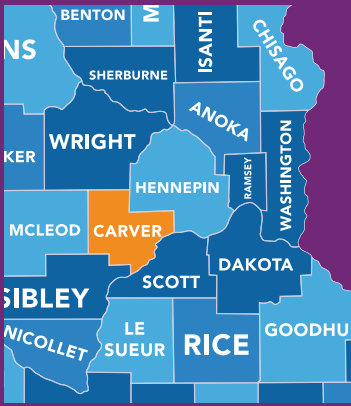


SUCCESS STORY: Johnny

Johnny participated in the Tree Trust Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) in 2022 and 2023. When Tree Trust staff first met Johnny in 2022, he relied on his sister to answer questions for him. Johnny thrived through participating in SYEP by learning to try new things and interacting with other crew members. In addition to receiving technical tool training, he developed social skills during group activities and problem-solving challenges with his crew.



By the end of his first year, his true self emerged – a bright, artistic, and kind young man. He returned in 2023 with the confidence developed the previous summer. He displayed a positive attitude, even when a task was challenging, and brought the crew together to accomplish their goals. His work ethic and ability to motivate the crew earned him an award from Governor Tim Walz. Johnny has developed into a decisive, humorous, and good leader.



Carver County

Carver County Health & Human Services

Kate Probert Fagundes, Deputy Director

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Phone: (952) 361-1600

www.co.carver.mn.us

Area served: Carver County

OVERVIEW

Carver County Health & Human Services serves youth ages 14-24 utilizing funds from both the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP).

The Summer Youth Program offered by Carver County is a 10-week work experience allowing students to test their interests, gain work experience, and earn a paycheck. Students can work up to a maximum of 25 hours per week during the summer and up to 15 hours per week during the school year. Throughout the program they are evaluated twice to help them know where they are exceling and where they could use improvement for when they enter the unsubsidized workforce.

Youth are introduced to career exploration by completing O-Net's mynextmove.org assessment. This assessment is based on interest categories developed by John Holland. The website provides a job interest report based on their assessment results, so youth have this information immediately before starting their work experience. 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 soft skills training was offered both in-person and virtually to youth and a Financial Literacy class was hosted in-person. The Pre-Employment webinar provided the youth the opportunity to learn about essential "soft skills" that are necessary to be successful in the workplace, including their summer work experience. One of the goals is to offer youth skills that they can use in everyday life. Carver County also offered a Financial Literacy two-hour class as part of the summer youth program as youth begin to earn a paycheck.

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

Carver County collaborates with Southwest Metro Co-op for Youthbuild, Auburn Manor, Chaska Heights Senior Living, Chanhassen Library, Chaska Library, Chaska Community Center, Country Inn & Suites, Carver County Historical Society, Victoria Rose Floral and Gifts, Trending Upward Thrift Shoppe, SJB Masonry, Winchester & Rye and CareerForce Chaska and many of these sites participated in the summer youth program this year. Worksites selected provide a genuine work experience and the worksite supervisors exhibit patience and create 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 Youthbuild work site also provides the opportunity for youth to earn academic credit while they learn valuable skills in the carpentry trade.

Carver County braids MYP funding with WIOA youth funding and all participants are 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. This year 14 youth enrolled, and most are traditionally under-represented in the workforce due to their race or disability. Demographically, 11 youth experience a disability and are low-income while 4 are youth of color. 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 staff 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. Carver County is focusing on providing services to all individuals with equity and cultural considerations in mind. If deemed ineligible for programming, Carver County makes every effort to offer youth additional resources and referrals to ensure their success.



SUCCESS STORY: Rachel

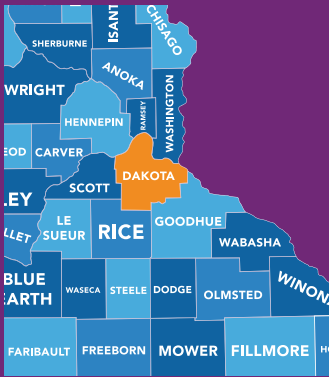


Rachel, aged 16 years old, was referred to the Summer Youth Employment Program from a Case Manager at Chanhassen High School.

This was Rachel's 2nd year in the Summer Youth Program, and she worked as a Summer Care Assistant with Auburn Manor in Chaska. Rachel has received outstanding reviews from her supervisor and is continuing to enhance her soft skills. According to her supervisor, Rachel has been a complete joy to work with! The residents truly appreciate Rachel and have enjoyed her company immensely. Rachel feels very comfortable in her role and has gotten to know the residents' names. Rachel takes pride in taking the residents on garden walks and transporting them to different activities. She enjoys being their companion and playing bingo with them. Rachel truly appreciates the residents as well. Overall, Rachel has been very happy in her role as a Summer Care Assistant. Rachel's supervisor and the residents are hopeful that Rachel will work at Auburn Manor next summer!

In her spare time, Rachel enjoys playing the piano and taking Tae Kwon Do lessons. She holds a 1st Degree Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do. Rachel is also in her 4th year as a participant with the Chaska Police Explorers Program. Rachel is returning to Chanhassen High School this Fall and looks forward to graduating from high school in 2025. Even as Rachel continues to deal with some very challenging health issues, she has proven to be a reliable, tenacious, and determined young lady who will be successful in any future career endeavors.





Dakota County

Dakota-Scott Workforce Services

Mark Jacobs, Director

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<https://www.careerforcemn.com/partner/dakota-scott-workforce-development-board-0>

Area served: Dakota County

OVERVIEW

Tree Trust's Career Pathways programming offers unique paid training opportunities for young people of all skill levels and abilities in the skilled trades and green industry as a way to enter sustainable, meaningful careers while avoiding educational debt. Their Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is a nine-week, entry-level program for participants ages 14-21. Participants work on an outdoor Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crew to learn practical skills while making the community a greener, healthier place to live by completing landscaping and construction projects.

Youth Conservation Corps Crews

In 2023, 45 youth from Dakota County worked on YCC crews. With the support of their crew leaders, field coordinators, and job coaches, the YCC youth learned good communication skills, how to offer and receive constructive feedback, and the importance of consistently showing up for work. They honed essential skills for the green industry and skilled trades, including the proper use of hand tools, jobsite safety, using personal protective equipment, construction math, and following directions to complete a plan.

In Apple Valley, YCC crews planted native perennials and worked on landscaping at Cobblestone Park. A pair of crews in Burnsville used construction math and building skills to construct benches for disc golf players to rest at while moving through the game. Also at the Red Oak Disc Golf Course, crews mulched the landings and performed vegetation management along the trails. Further north in Dakota County, a West Saint Paul crew worked on hardscaping: arranging cut rocks to protect and beautify the area around park signs. At the West Saint Paul Sports complex, these crews also constructed a timber retaining wall at nearly record speed. In between projects, all Dakota County crews had the opportunity to learn about and remove invasive species from parks, namely the persistent buckthorn.

With the completion of each project, the crews had the satisfaction of seeing firsthand how they had transformed local green spaces for the community to enjoy. They shared the results of their summer work with family, friends, funders, and other supporters at an end-of-summer celebration in August. Crew leaders displayed before and after photos of the project worksites, detailing various challenges that the crew members

had overcome together and sharing their successes. Thirty-six (80%) participants were recognized by name for their perfect attendance at work this summer.

BEST PRACTICES

Building Life Skills

Through SYEP, youth have opportunities to develop basic life skills that provide a solid foundation for future employment and success in any career. Participants belong to a supportive team at Tree Trust that provides mentoring in setting and pursuing goals, learning financial literacy, creating a resume, and interacting well with others. Following the program this year, several parents/guardians commented on the growth they saw in their youth and how the supportive, structured environment of the Summer Youth Employment Program had allowed youth of all backgrounds and abilities to flourish.

Certifications

Summer Youth Employment Program participants can earn a Tree Trust Certificate which includes modules in Worksite Safety, Employability, Financial Literacy, Tool Identification, and Environmental Stewardship. Youth learn to identify workplace hazards and measure accurately, to collaborate on a team, to handle a paycheck, and to identify native and invasive plants. Additionally, they study the benefits of trees and green spaces for the environment and human health. The Tree Trust Certificates track professional development and serve as building blocks for further career advancement. In SFY 2023, 36 Dakota County participants (80%) achieved these certificates.

Leadership Opportunities

YCC participants are given both formal and informal opportunities to lead within their crews. After the second week of the program, Crew Leaders chose one member of each crew to receive a promotion to become the Assistant Crew Leader. Assistants take on extra responsibilities, such as overseeing tool inventories or leading a small group of participants in a project. As an example of power-sharing, crew leaders invite past participants to step up and teach the crew what they have learned about building techniques or ecosystems. Based on their initiative, positive attitude, and teamwork, all participants may earn a raise mid-way through the summer, which 31 (72%) or crew members received in 2023.



SUCCESS STORY: George

George was a Youth Conservation Corps crew participant at both Cobblestone Park in Apple Valley and the Red Oak Disc Golf Course in Burnsville. A student of the TESA program in Dakota County, George came into the summer with experience doing yard work at home and while volunteering with his church, but was excited and nervous about the prospect of doing large projects with a team. From the beginning, he took directions from his crew leader with enthusiasm, but struggled with staying focused. As the summer progressed, his crew leader saw immense growth in his critical thinking, initiative, and ability to see a task through. Near the end of summer, George impressed the whole crew by leading a small group to go above and beyond to clear a new trail – buckthorn, branches, and all.

Along with his leadership, George set goals at the beginning of summer to improve his interpersonal skills while working with a team. The Tree Trust staff helped coach him through conflicts on the crew, and from these experiences George learned to listen to his coworkers and respect their opinions. George became a major asset to his crew, both as a leader and helper. At the summer celebration, George was recognized for these accomplishments with the prestigious Governor's Award. He was recognized on stage with comments on his outstanding work ethic and influence as a "thoughtful and considerate" crew member.

Through this work experience, George improved his social skills and saw the impact of his work on the community. Recognizing that he thrived in a hands-on environment, he started exploring his interest in the trades through career exploration lessons. After working with his job coach, George has made plans to attend Dakota County Technical College for welding in the future.

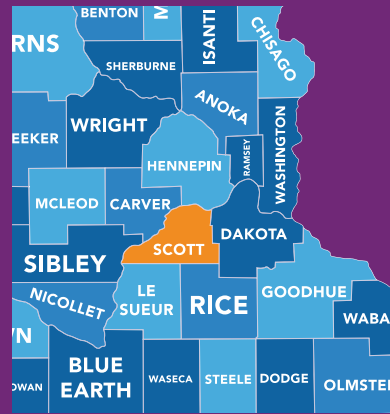
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Tree Trust has well-established partnerships with an extensive network of local organizations, including schools, private foundations, social services, government entities, and businesses. Dakota County partners include DEED Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Dakota County Technical College, 360 Communities, BEST Transition, Hastings High School, Lakeview South High School, Farmington High School, Apple Valley High School, Burnsville High School, and Dakota Ridge High School. Tree Trust collaborates with these community partners for program referrals, participant support services, internships, and employment opportunities.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- "Tree Trust made me feel more responsible and aware. I am more comfortable to speak to others."
- "I have had a lot more to do, and I work with people much better."
- "I feel like there are people at Tree Trust I can depend on when I need help."
- "I learned how to be a leader."





Scott County

Scott County Employment and Training

Brandon Kmety, Supervisor

Government Center West

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Phone: (952) 445-7751

<https://www.scottcountymn.gov/475/Employment-Training>

Area served: Scott County

OVERVIEW

Scott County Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) 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 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 them in meeting their education, training, and work experience goals. MYP youth in post-secondary education programs include Esthetician, IT Helpdesk, Public Health Associate, and Commercial Drivers License.

Scott County Employment and Training 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 include county funds, WIOA Youth Program funds, WIOA Adult funds, TANF Consolidated Fund, Youthbuild funds and local school funds.

Scott County Employment and Training hosted two interns from Shakopee High School's CAPS program. The interns assisted Scott County Employment and Training with marketing and outreach by developing marketing strategies to reach potential customers. They produced materials and strategies to reach current students and other eligible youth.

BEST PRACTICE

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

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

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

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

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

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- *"I have never had a job and needed to know I could do it." – YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- *"I am lucky to be able to earn some extra money while learning new skills." – YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- *"My counselor made me get out of my comfort zone and try something new. I am so grateful." – YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- *"It has been a pleasure to help these youth. It has been a pleasure to watch them gain the skills they will need in the future." – SUPERVISOR*

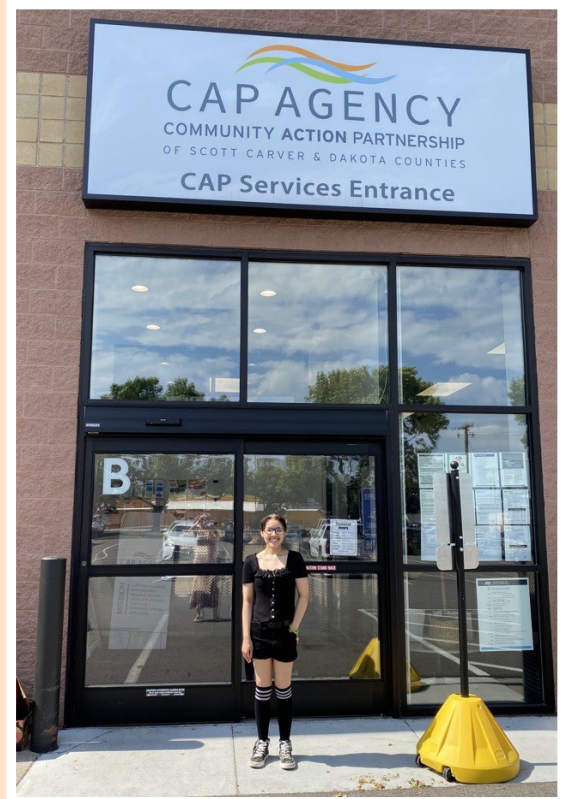


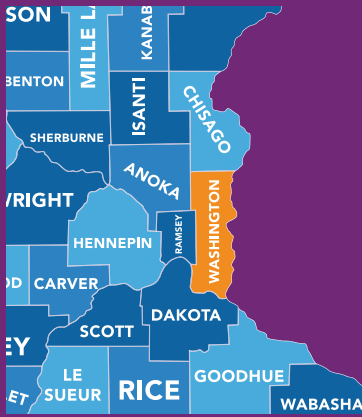
SUCCESS STORY: **KAYLA**

Kayla was a high school student and the only child of a single mother. She knew it was time for her to find a job, but she was very nervous because she had never worked for anybody before. Her mother encouraged her to contact the Scott County Youth program. She met with her employment counselor and they came up with a plan. Kayla could start out working a few hours while she continued to work towards her high school graduation. Kayla was very nervous about this but she knew that she needed to take the first step and she knew this would be the best way for her to do it. She felt that she could with the support of her mother and her employment counselor.

Kayla met with the supervisor of a local thrift store and agreed to start a work experience there. Initially she started only working a few hours a week. As she gained skills and confidence, she decided to increase her hours and was doing an excellent job. Her worksite supervisor informed the employment counselor that “Kayla was doing an excellent job. She is one of the best workers that we have had. She is on time every day, works hard and maintains a very positive attitude. Kayla has made several friends here and she really seems to enjoy working.”

Kayla has since earned her high school diploma and continues to work at the thrift store. She is working closely with her employment counselor to look at training programs. She stated that she now has confidence that she did not have before and she is ready to think about her future education and career.





Washington County

Washington County CareerForce

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Woodbury Service Center

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Phone: (651) 275-8650

www.mn.gov/deed/woodbury

Area served: Washington County

OVERVIEW

Washington County provides a mix of direct and contracted work experience and career pathway activities to eligible youth. Tree Trust is the contracted provider for summer work experience. Tree Trust enrolled 28 Washington County youth in 2023. The flexibility of MN Youth program (MYP) funds allows Washington County to provide: a) first-time work experience for youth who may not find success in a first job without the additional support available with the structure of MYP services and worksites; and b) access to meaningful work in their own neighborhood for youth who face transportation barriers.

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 the 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 Conservation Corps Crew: Tree Trust provides work experience in a conservation corps model, providing close, onsite supervision and teaching of work readiness, tool use, and safety skills. Results of effort are visible and tangible, providing lasting projects at public worksites in the communities where work is performed. Washington County youth are eligible to earn a merit-based raise based on performance factors. Youth also complete lessons in basic budgeting and job search.

Leadership Development: Youth in the communities of Landfall and Cimarron who work as assistants for youth activities operated by Family Means (a non-profit agency serving Washington County) are trained in leadership traits and behaviors. Younger youth who live in the communities participate in the youth activities, and Washington County youth enrolled in work experience as activities assistants are seen as mentors and leaders in the community.

SERVING YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Tree Trust has over 45 years of experience working with youth with disabilities. In summers 2022 and 2023, 78% of Washington County youth served by Tree Trust identified as having a disability. Recruiting is accomplished through targeted outreach to, and referrals from, partner organizations that work directly with this population. Serving youth with disabilities 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 a history of collaboration with Family Means, a community-based non-profit that provides after-school and summer programming for children and teens in low-income communities. Washington County offers paid work experience with MYP funds 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.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- "It taught me good skills and it was nice getting paid for my first time." – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- "I've gotten stronger, and I've gotten to know how to build a staircase. The best part about my experience was meeting new people." – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*



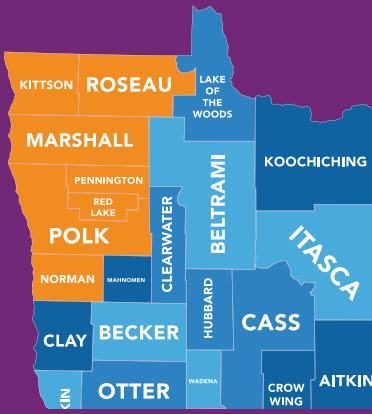
SUCCESS STORY: **Alex**

Alex worked with Tree Trust two consecutive summers. In this most recent summer program he took on the leadership role as an Assistant Crew Leader. This allowed him to practice and grow in his leadership ability. His experience and capacity to coach others while bonding with the crew members is amazing. He taught crew members the physical skills (how to hold a mattock, level lumber, and use a drill) while also explaining the reason why they were using that technique. He helped them see the bigger picture. He also assisted with teaching lessons. He taught on invasive species and repeatedly identified them around the worksite. Alex is both a fantastic worker and leader. His expertise and mentorship contributed to a successful completion of the timber staircase project that his crew was working on this summer.



Alex (R) is pictured with fellow crew member Konstantin (L).





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

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

OVERVIEW

Inter-County Community Council (ICCC) is a private, nonprofit organization providing employment and training services to youth and young adults in the seven counties of Northwest Minnesota. ICCC works with school districts, social service agencies, probation and parole agencies, and foster care providers along with in-house departments to identify youth that are at-risk and could benefit from the MYP program. ICCC connects youth who have significant barriers to employment to activities and/or employment opportunities that will help reduce those barriers. ICCC focuses on assisting youth with developing and maintaining job and soft skills to be successful in the workforce. ICCC case managers review in-demand occupations and provide youth with assessment tools to identify good career choices based on their individual interests and strengths. ICCC provides services through paid work experiences and additional training as needed. ICCC case managers work closely with each youth on an individual level to ensure continued success in school and work. ICCC's goal is for each youth to feel valued and employable in the future. These services are funded through directly received MYP funds and federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth funds received from the Northwest Private Industry Council. All youth programs are developed with insight and recommendation from staff, the Youth Committee members and the full local workforce development board.

BEST PRACTICES

Referrals and well-established partnerships between ICCC and partner agencies in northwest Minnesota are key to youth succeeding in the MYP in the region. Youth participating in MYP sometimes require more resources to overcome their barriers. Being able to refer these youth to partner agencies to assist them with other needs allows ICCC to focus on helping youth succeed in their employment plans. Relationships with partners, worksites and the youth are also very important to the success of MYP. Case managers develop relationships with the youth to better understand what they are going through, what they need to be successful and what challenges they may need to overcome. ICCC focuses on giving these youth paid work experiences; this could be challenging in rural Minnesota if not for the relationships that the case managers have and continue to develop with employers and other worksites. ICCC

depends on relationships with local school districts, county human services and other partners for referrals of youth that could benefit from MYP. Through referrals, ICCC provides wrap-around services for the youth making sure they do not slip through the cracks of the system.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

- Local secondary and alternative schools – referrals and worksites
- Public, non-profit, and private sector employers – work experience programs
- Community Action Partnership (CAP) Agencies – referrals and worksites
- County Human Services – referrals
- CareerForce partners – referrals and worksite development

SERVING BIPOC YOUTH AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

ICCC is deliberate in its efforts to serve youth of color and youth with disabilities. Examples include:

- Partnering with Adult Basic Education (ABE) and local New American organizations in East Grand Forks to provide resources for the area's New American population. Through this partnership ICCC funded paid work experience for New American youth to be classroom aides that helped with technology in a combined English Language Learner/Career Exploration class offered by ABE.
- Partnering with Vocational Rehabilitation Services through Pre-ETS programs has increased our outreach to youth with disabilities.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- "I wasn't confident enough to apply for a job before I went through a year of work experience, but I had no fear this summer looking for a job and interviewing." – *PARTICIPANT*
- "It was great watching the youth grow as they worked." – *WORKSITE SUPERVISOR*
- "I wasn't sure if the youth would ever have enough confidence to work independently." – *SPECIAL ED TEACHER*



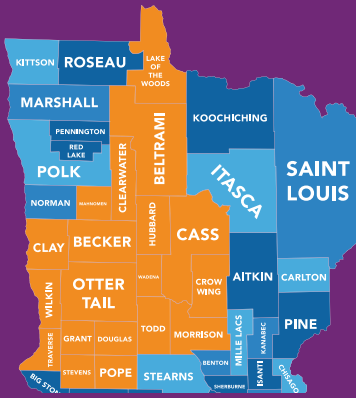
SUCCESS STORY: **KIRSTEN**

Kirsten was referred to ICCC by high school staff during her senior year. Kirsten was struggling with recently being homeless, not having any work experience and lacking social skills.

ICCC staff worked with Kirsten starting by assessing her interests and strengths. ICCC staff suggested a few potential worksites after completing an assessment and Kirsten expressed interest in working at the humane society shelter. ICCC staff reached out to the shelter's supervisor and the shelter was willing to be a worksite. Kirsten would be responsible for cleaning animal cages and caring for animals housed at the shelter. After only one month at the humane society, Kirsten had received positive reviews from her supervisors and her responsibilities were increased. In addition to previous duties, she also was tasked with posting to Facebook for the shelter and entering data into the computer system. Kirsten's work experience continued until she graduated at the end of the school year.

The humane society was so happy with Kirsten that they hired her after graduation. Kirsten remained employed at the shelter for a year until she left to attend college at the University of Minnesota for Computer Science. She is working at a shelter close to campus.





Rural Minnesota

Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program (RMCEP)

Tina Jaster, Executive Director

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

Phone: (218) 846-7400

rmcep.com

Counties 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 private, non-profit employment and training agency. The RMCEP service delivery area covers 19 counties in Northwest Minnesota and includes 8 CareerForce Centers. Much of the area is considered rural with some larger population centers. RMCEP provides youth with individualized career pathway exploration that includes assessment and career investigation including the following services: information on the labor market and in-demand careers, work readiness skills development, work experience, training assistance, job seeking techniques and support services. Staff works with youth to eliminate or alleviate the effects of barriers to participate in a successful road to self-sufficiency. Local businesses and communities provide youth with opportunities for hands-on skill development, mentoring, and equity, cultural and inclusion exposure in the worksite.

RMCEP braids funding as needed between MYP, WIOA youth funds, Youthbuild, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Youth, Youth at Work and Outreach to School funds to provide seamless services to a wide array of youth. RMCEP youth programs serve participants ages 14-24 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.

BEST PRACTICES

Youth Coordinators use a variety of platforms to meet youth where they are, which is key for successful communication. Youth Coordinators focus on what is needed to help youth be successful, listening for understanding, deciding on a solid path, and decision making. Employer engagement and support in mentor relationships are also cultivated.

- Youth Service Coordinators have been invited to assist at High School Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) nights. This has proven to be an outstanding method of informing seniors and parents of RMCEP programs including the Out-of-School Youth (OSY) program and school funding opportunities. Many current participants are being served due to this connection.
- RMCEP provided a Youth Financial Literacy Skills class which included two guest speakers from Bremer Bank. Both speakers were active in Junior Achievement and thus had significant experience in talking to youth about Financial Literacy.

- RMCEP provides Career Advising services to 4 school districts in the area. All other schools are contacted by Youth Counselors who offer to do presentations to classes on the labor market, career pathways exploration and resume creation.
- Eligible MYP participants are considered for enrollment into RMCEP's other programs, WIOA Youth Programs, Youth at Work, Youthbuild, and TANF Youth, so program funds can be blended and braided to ensure seamless services.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

- RMCEP Youth Coordinators have strong partnerships with local schools and Area Learning Centers (ALCs), ABE, mental health providers, crisis centers, youth centers for homeless or at-risk populations, youth ministry, Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), probation/juvenile justice, housing, school Individualized Education Plan (IEP) managers, foster care, and business worksites. Worksites, which provide a setting for youth to "try out" an occupation, learn employability skills, and grow from social exchanges, are a critical part of the programs.
- Youth Coordinators serve as classroom speakers, participate in career fairs, contribute through Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTICs), and as members at IEP meetings. Together, these partnerships allow for collaboration using wrap-around services as well as obtaining and giving referrals. All participants receive individualized services.
- Colleges continue to be partners in serving youth. RMCEP participated in Cyclone Alley, an event for new students and the public, at St. Cloud Community and Technical College. This was an excellent opportunity to network with students and the public as well as staff and instructors and provided the opportunity to remind attendees of the RMCEP programs and service area.
- RMCEP has developed over 900 worksites within the service delivery area over time. DJ Products, a local manufacturing company, is one example. The owner and his family created a new marketing/screen printing/embroidery business (White Wolf). This connection led to a new worksite for a graphic design student. The DJ Products/White Wolf demonstrates how existing relationships can grow into new opportunities to serve youth. Professional networking and connections are critical to referrals.
- Educational systems offer youth the opportunity to earn school credits for their work experience activity.

SERVING BIPOC AND UNDER-REPRESENTED YOUTH

Northwest Minnesota's population is relatively non-diverse but is increasing over time. Through 2018, 10.7% of the population reported a different race than White and they held just 7.7% of the total jobs in the area. RMCEP serves an area with three American Indian Tribal Nations and the border city of Moorhead which has been the home for many immigrants in the area. This past year, RMCEP served 455 youth. Of those, 24% were persons of color or American Indian, 63% had a disability, 5.3% were involved in the justice system, 1.5% were in foster care, 2.85% were homeless and 46.6% were female. Age ranges for the youth served were ages 14-15 = 10.8%, 16-17 = 20.9%, 18-21 = 50.8% and 22-24 = 12.7%. Of those youth served, 48.8% were in school. Many at-risk youth come from low-income families and families made up of many generations living in the same household. Youth with a disability represent the fastest growing underserved population which may require more complex or lengthy partnering to make sure all types of interventions and supports are available to the participant.

Resources and speakers on inclusion and diversity are also part of RMCEP's professional development to build staff cultural competencies.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

Career Advisors work individually with students to determine appropriate career goals and develop plans to reach those goals. RMCEP works with 4 school districts to provide a Career Advisor menu of services.

Outreach material used this year included, "The Path to Workforce Success", published by the DEED Labor Market Information Office for NW MN in October of 2022. The MN Careers Interest Assessment is a basic tool and available in a paper or online format. Utilizing these resources, youth explore how their current interests and abilities translate into the type of career and education they want to pursue, be it college, technical college, trade school, apprenticeship, or on-the-job training. Outreach can be provided at any level; the focus is on those students in 10th grade and up as they are closest to making that transition after high school.

CareerViewXR, through Be More Colorful, is a locally-created immersive 360° media platform that serves as a fresh, new job exploration tool for high-demand trade careers. CareerViewXR provides the immersive nature of a field trip or job shadow. RMCEP has purchased headsets for use with this technology and has been using them with youth who are in a juvenile justice center where they are not allowed to leave. This method allows staff to bring job shadow and career exploration experiences to them when providing Career Advising services. Use of this technology is being expanded to all youth as part of RMCEP career exploration activities.

Part of the Outreach to Schools funding is focused on job fairs which have employers who hire youth under 18. To promote youth attendance and interaction, RMCEP provides schools with assistance in covering the cost of bussing students to the job fairs. Trade unions and employers are encouraged to attend with hands-on opportunities for attendees. The Big Ideas trailer, with virtual hands-on activities in 30 different careers, is also part of the job fairs when possible. Each local Youth Services

Coordinator helps connect youth to employers at the fairs and promotes the youth programs available through RMCEP.

At one of the job fairs held this year, students and members of the public were exposed to over 60 businesses and these businesses were exposed to a pool of over 900 attendees. Food trucks were on site, bingo cards were used to encourage contact with each business, and prizes awarded. Interactive activities were used by businesses and RMCEP to provide an opportunity to share information about jobs and services.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

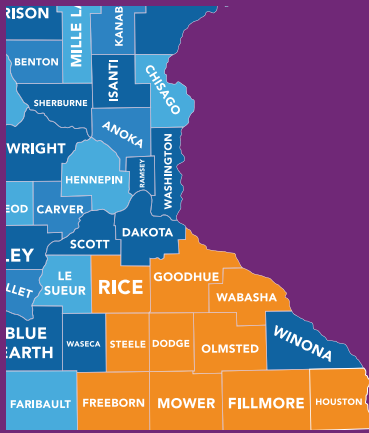
- "Janitors do not get enough credit for all that they do."
– *YOUTH PARTICIPANT FOLLOWING A SUCCESSFUL WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT AT A LOCAL SCHOOL.*
- "Working with RMCEP staff to match youth who fit into our organization and having two hard working young people assisting with projects has been an amazing help."
– *WORKSITE SUPERVISOR*
- "He is a different kid now that he's employed!"
– *SCHOOL PRINCIPAL*
- "Worksites provide meaningful employment and skills training for youth. Worksite supervisors wished more youth would have applied for the program and that more funding was available to help during the school year as well as during the summer months - they feel keeping the youth engaged even during the school year in employment gives the youth self-esteem, income, and keeps them engaged in school, which they feel is a win-win for the youth and the school."
– *YOUTH JOB COUNSELOR*
- "We were able to engage 8 new worksites this year. They have been positive and turned into excellent worksites that would now like to continue being a worksite in future."
– *YOUTH JOB COUNSELOR*



SUCCESS STORY: Lynda

"I was just a high school graduate that wanted to go to college, but I didn't have the funds but had heard of this financial help through the work force center. So, I stopped by just to see if it was a possibility to get a little help, and the amount of support, help and encouragement was outstanding. They helped with most of my financial payments for school which helped a lot by allowing me to focus on my program. Due to that stress relief, I was able to graduate with honors. Karla was always checking in with me just to see how I was doing in the program. I am now a college honors graduate with a full-time job doing work I enjoy with great people to learn from and work with. Also, I have very little debt from college. Would I recommend your services to others: Oh, heck yeah...yes!"





Southeast Minnesota

Southeast Minnesota Workforce Development Inc.

Jinny Rietmann, Director

2070 College View Rd E, Rochester, MN 55904

Phone: (507) 292-5152

www.workforcedevelopmentinc.org

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

OVERVIEW

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) 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 participants 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. In the Construction/Trades program, 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 the cities of 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 and independent living skills training, 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 Houston and Fillmore counties, a multi-school/employer collaboration among seven school districts has developed work-based learning opportunities that mirror one another to offer similar ways to connect for employers. In Mower and Freeborn counties, a dedicated Southeast Asian Outreach Specialist helps youth ages 18 and older with career navigation, college supports and a variety of employer connections.

WDI also offers scholarship opportunities to program enrollees who choose to further their education at the post-secondary level. For the fall semester of 2022, four 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, through which 10 youth per semester earn school credit and a work experience 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. This year WDI was able to expand the Youthbuild program to Rice county.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

In youth programming, the most success is achieved through collaboration 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. The input and participation of youth is valued in all aspects of programming as well. Some of the most important partners are employers, providing real-life work experiences and funding for career pathways programming, including key stakeholders such as Mayo Clinic, Habitat ReStore and local trades union partners.

A wide variety of funding streams support WDI programs, and all of these are vital to help maintain consistent programming. MYP funds are often braided into co-enrollments with other programs to better serve youth, including Adult Career Pathways, Youth Support Services, Career Pathways Pilot Program (CP3), Youth Intervention Program, TANF, Youthbuild and Pre-ETS. Without the availability of co-enrollment with multiple funding sources, opportunities for youth would be greatly diminished. Being able to diversify services allows the youth staff to implement more thorough programming, thus providing more benefit to local youth.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

Through the development of the Emerging Leaders program, WDI has advanced in developing partnerships and coming together with other 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. WDI continues to make gains in tackling equity in employment for youth of color. Approximately 13% of Southeast Minnesota residents are members of Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities.

OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

Career Planners work closely with schools, providing information to administrators, teachers and students on the services available through youth programming, and the Career EdVenture curriculum provides schools with easy access to a variety of topics and services. WDI staff have regular hours at the various schools throughout the 43 districts in the region. Working with school counselors and reaching students through class presentations allows students easy access to employment and education opportunities. 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’m proud of myself for taking my future seriously and taking steps to reaching a certain goal. The staff helped me realize I could do it.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “They never gave up on me and I appreciate that and everything they do to help me do better in life.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*
- “I feel as the path of my personal future has become much clearer by the things I reviewed and considered with the help of WDI.” – *YOUTH PARTICIPANT*



SUCCESS STORY: Monica

Monica began working with WDI in 2014 after giving birth to her son. Prior to enrolling in the youth & young adult program, she had attended a few classes at Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) but left once she found out she was pregnant and began working as a Personal Care Assistant (PCA) for her ill grandmother. Monica said she’d always gone back and forth on what type of a career she was interested in; she’d considered nursing because she liked working with people, but she brushed it off at the time because the amount of schooling required was intimidating to her, especially as a new mother. Monica began caring for her grandmother and said it was both challenging and rewarding – and it was ultimately what inspired her to want to pursue a career in the nursing field.

WDI assisted Monica with scholarships to return to school and earn her Advanced Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) degree at RCTC. Monica faced many barriers during her schooling journey including financial hardships and balancing school, work, and being a mother to two children on top of her nursing clinicals, but she persevered and never gave up. She said she wants to be a role model for her children and show them that hard work can help you reach your goals. WDI continued to provide career guidance, financial supports, and job search assistance to Monica in the following years while she worked her way through school. In December 2021 Monica graduated from Viterbo University in La Crosse with her BSN in nursing. In the fall of 2022 she passed her NCLEX exam and began a nursing position at the Mayo Clinic in December 2022 where she is happily employed today.

From Monica: “If WDI wasn’t a part of my journey I honestly couldn’t have been here. I wouldn’t have had the encouragement to keep on going without the amount of support you guys have invested in me. It honestly makes me appreciate life more and more, that I was able to go for my dreams because other people believed in me and pushed me forward. I’m so thankful for you and WDI that words cannot express because there would have been no RN behind (my name) if I didn’t receive WDI’s support. I love you guys so much for what you do for the community and my biggest goal is to give back when I’m able to and to help my community! Being a part of WDI has inspired me a lot to reach out to others for help and to give back the help as I can. Thank you for all you do!”





Winona County

Winona County WorkForce Council

Rick Pospichal, Youth Program Manager

1250 Homer Road – Suite 200

Winona, MN 55987

Phone: (507) 205-6058

www.CareerForceMN.com/winona

Area served: Winona County

OVERVIEW

The Winona County Youth and Young Adult programs serve youth ages 16-24 with barriers to employment. Youth earn academic credit and a paycheck, while building confidence, gaining essential employment skills, and specific work-related skills throughout the duration of the program. The youth program offers hope and provides clarity to participants and their families regarding the transition from secondary education to post-secondary education and/or entering the workforce.

The program provides local businesses with employees. CareerForce staff work closely with school staff and employers to ensure youth are fully engaged in work experience and youth have an opportunity to transition to competitive employment at the end of the program. Many employers enjoy the opportunity to mentor and train youth and to observe the personal growth that happens over the school year.

BEST PRACTICES

Work Experience is offered at all the school districts located in Winona County along with the Winona Alternative Learning Center, and the Hiawatha Valley Education District Alternative Learning Center located at Minnesota State College Southeast. CareerForce staff work closely with the high school work-based learning coordinators to identify and enroll students in the Minnesota Youth Program. Youth are assigned a work site within the community, or the school district, and they work 4 days per week. Prior to reporting to the work site youth complete interest assessments, review child labor laws and work site responsibilities, and complete basic safety training. Youth spend one day per week in the classroom learning about managing money, practicing professional communication, completing mock interviews, creating a resume and cover letter, and practicing other skills that will help prepare them to enter the workforce.

Youth Work Skills Challenge is a day where students of all abilities from throughout southeast Minnesota come together to learn and compete against each other in real-world work scenarios such as applications, resumes and interviews. Students listen to speakers, receive resources, and engage with agencies focused on life skills and/or opportunities for growth in careers.

A major component of the program is placing youth in worksites throughout the community. However, because the program serves youth with a variety of barriers many youth are enrolled in the program for multiple years. A young person may initially be placed at a work site within the school district with more supervision and as work skills are gained, they will transition into a community-based position. Before sending 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 school worksite. Youth gain a deeper appreciation of work, through the actual experience of having to be at work on time, follow a supervisor's instructions, get along with coworkers and other work-related soft skills gained on the job. Staff work to provide worksites that are easily accessible to the youth, including youth in the cities of Winona County and in rural areas.

Youth staff work with students in three school districts and two alternative learning centers throughout the school year. Collaborating with high school instructors is essential to the success of the program and CareerForce staff complement the work that is being done within the schools.

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.

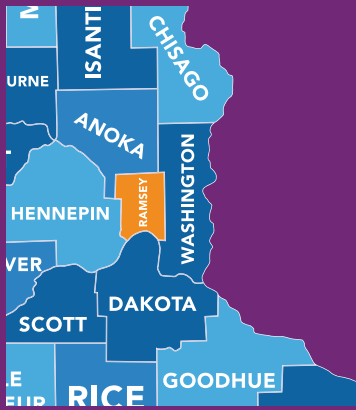
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

The Winona Youth and Young Adult Program partners with and utilizes community resources provided by organizations such as Winona County Social Services, the Winona School District Academic Success Coordinators, the Southeast Service Coop Career Navigators, and SEMCIL to coordinate services for area youth. Staff synchronize efforts with Vocational Rehabilitation Services and counselors with the MFIP programs to maximize positive outcomes. Youth program staff coordinate recruitment efforts with Minnesota State College Southeast and Winona State University to ensure youth are aware of careers and corresponding training in area with high demand living wage occupations.

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

121 Seventh Place E., Suite 2100

Saint Paul, MN 55101

Phone: (651) 266-9890

www.ramseycounty.us/youngadultemploymentprogram

Area served: City of Saint Paul & Ramsey County

OVERVIEW

In 2022-2023, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions (WFS) delivered Minnesota Youth Program employment and training supports to young people ages 14-24 through seven community-based vendor organizations: 30,000 Feet, Hired, Hmong American Partnership, Restoration for All Inc., Tree Trust, Urban Boatbuilder, and Youthprise. WFS provides oversight and extensive technical assistance to ensure that policy is being followed, but more importantly that the needs of young people are being met. Services are guided by Ramsey County's vision of "A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive."

BEST PRACTICES

Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) services through Ramsey County's Youth and Young Adult Employment Program partners include individualized, year-round comprehensive guidance and supports. Together, the vendors provided more than four hundred youth and young adults with work experiences, internships, and other employment exposure opportunities. Through public- and private-sector collaborations, Ramsey County's program partners provide unique, hands-on training opportunities.

Some examples of these experiences include [Urban Boatbuilders](#), [Tree Trust](#) and [Hired](#). Urban Boat Builders supports youth by teaching construction & work readiness skills in paid work experiences while they work together as a team to build canoes and other woodworking projects. Tree Trust also teaches teamwork and work readiness through their summer employment program, in which young people work with a crew on public and private projects in the landscaping & tree industry, including with Ramsey County Parks & Recreation. Hired has partnered with the Construction Careers Foundation to provide trades exploration opportunities for youth in the [Minnesota Trades Academy](#).

To ensure that more youth have positive work experiences and internships, Ramsey County will be offering Youth Friendly Supervisor Training. In partnership with World Youth Connect (a youth led organization), these sessions will train supervisors – including those at MYP internship/apprenticeship/employment sites – on appropriate and necessary styles of engagement and support for young people. To ensure that youth participants are

connected with appropriate and adequate supports, Ramsey County and the Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative co-host twice-per-month meetings where youth resource practitioners collectively promote the holistic array of offerings within our community. Altogether, the County and its vendor partners continue to work with local businesses and organizations to provide safe and supportive work opportunities for youth and young adults in all formats.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Many community and state partners have contributed to the success of Ramsey County Youth and Young Adult Employment Programs. Case management and other program elements were delivered through WFS's seven vendor partners who provide outstanding employment supports to young people. Educational partners include, but are not limited to, Saint Paul Public Schools, Roseville Area Schools, White Bear Lake Area Schools, Mounds View Public Schools, Saint Paul School District Career Connect, Saint Paul College, Century College, and Change Inc. Additionally, many employer partners aided in the development and support of youth participants, including ISD 622, High School for Recording Arts, Ramsey County Libraries, Minnesota Trades Academy, The Sanneh Foundation, Solid Ground, Cookie Cart, Urban Roots, Bridgemakers, World Youth Connect, and many more. Each of these partner organizations participate in Ramsey County's and the Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative's bi-monthly practitioner meetings for cross-organization collaborative planning and resource share-outs.

SERVING YOUTH OF COLOR

As the most racially & ethnically diverse county in Minnesota, Ramsey County WFS and partners use county and state data to strategically plan and deliver youth services to neighborhoods and communities who have historically been under-served by the workforce system. Ramsey County served 89% youth who identified as a race other than "white alone", and 8% of the remaining youth identified their ethnicity as "Hispanic or Latino(x)". To ensure that their specific cultural and community needs were met, Ramsey County partnered with culturally specific, BIPOC-led, organizations, including 30,000 Feet, Hmong American Partnership, and Restoration for All Inc.



SUCCESS STORY: Kyla



Before starting work at 30,000 Feet (30k), Kyla struggled with social anxiety around her peers. But, thanks to the safe online learning space and individualized service that 30k provides for its youth participants, Kyla has opened up and made friends with other young people in the Tech Geeks Program. Moreover, with the help of program supports, Kyla earned an industry-standard, JavaScript certification!

Most recently, Kyla entered into Post Secondary Education Options (PSEO) and will be studying game development in college, with the goal of addressing the over-sexualization of women in video games and the detrimental effects of Grand Theft Auto on our communities.

Kyla has testified at the Minnesota State Capitol to share these experiences and help 30k secure funding for their state-of-the-art innovation hub, where Black youth, community, and families can explore arts, technology, and drive economic development on St. Paul's East Side.

In her own words, Kyla has said of Tech Geeks: "I'm so glad to be participating in this program. I am grateful for the co-founders to have come up with something like this for our community. I will do my best and my part to be a successful young adult as a graduate student of 30,000 Feet".



SFY 2023 MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM (MYP) DATA SUMMARY (JULY 1, 2022 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023)

COMBINED WDA TOTALS		TOTAL	PCT	WDA 1	WDA 2	WDA 3	WDA 4	WDA 5	WDA 6	WDA 7	WDA 8	WDA 9H
1. Total Participants Served		3,766		57	354	231	116	330	87	306	312	249
1a. Total Participants Exited		2,410		24	178	74	50	126	58	163	161	131
Gender	2a. Male	1,812	48.1%	33	159	133	59	157	35	133	154	123
	2b. Female	1,922	51.0%	24	195	97	47	173	52	171	157	126
	2c. Did Not Self-Identify	32	0.8%	0	0	1	10	0	0	2	1	0
Age	3a. 14 - 15	1,271	33.7%	19	108	17	23	59	21	81	24	31
	3b. 16 -17	1,214	32.2%	30	122	87	30	116	43	109	118	109
	3c. 18	525	13.9%	7	55	58	14	66	18	42	63	35
	3d. 19 - 21	537	14.3%	1	49	29	38	66	5	56	63	55
	3e. 22 - 24	198	5.3%	0	13	15	21	23	0	18	44	19
Ethnicity / Race	4a. Hispanic/Latino	541	14.4%	29	18	5	19	61	34	66	71	0
	4b. American Indian or Alaska Native	119	3.2%	2	28	13	17	12	6	1	1	4
	4c. Asian or Pacific Islander	235	6.2%	0	1	0	1	17	4	3	18	27
	4d. Black or African American	1,125	29.9%	7	19	6	23	18	0	45	54	184
	4e. White	1,756	46.6%	41	289	200	41	237	69	236	203	15
	4f. Multi Race	250	6.6%	5	0	12	30	18	3	14	26	7
Education Level	5a. Grades K-12 (No Diploma/GED)	2,878	76.4%	55	261	128	95	253	82	247	205	141
	5b. High School graduate or equivalent	674	17.9%	1	81	81	15	63	5	54	84	58
	5c. Post-Secondary Education	102	2.7%	1	12	22	7	15	0	4	18	4
Other Demographics	6. Limited English Proficient	235	6.2%	9	2	1	0	37	3	11	15	7
	7. Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	2,301	61.1%	49	154	137	73	140	36	162	156	125
	8. Foster Youth	177	4.7%	5	10	20	29	23	4	14	15	5
	9. Youth with a Disability	1,510	40.1%	29	231	34	21	132	18	180	88	18
	10. High School Drop-Out	646	17.2%	16	54	53	27	30	5	23	182	7
	11. Offender	193	5.1%	4	19	10	16	24	18	28	31	2
	12. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	171	4.5%	2	10	24	13	21	2	29	46	2
	13. Basic Skills Deficient	1,177	31.3%	32	307	55	13	239	20	123	13	97
	14. Homeless or Runaway Youth	186	4.9%	6	5	18	27	18	1	9	19	4
	15. Not Employed at Program Enrollment	2,448	65.0%	53	26	89	38	158	58	209	140	149
PROGRAM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELATED ASSISTANCE												
1. Received Education/ Job Training Activities		1,757	46.7%	51	30	25	57	171	20	217	235	95
2. Received Work Experience Activities		2,079	55.2%	49	395	204	69	95	46	159	125	153
3. Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities		597	15.9%	0	14	13	5	11	0	6	1	91
4. Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities		1,657	44.0%	57	42	36	7	289	4	139	312	137
5. Received Mentoring Activities		374	9.9%	0	36	32	0	0	6	166	2	132
6. Received Support Services		354	9.4%	3	0	24	52	38	15	37	45	0
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE (Based on Number Served)												
1. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS		2,196	91.1%	22	183	66	30	181	31	155	141	113
2. Received Academic/Service Learning Credit		1,508	62.6%	20	0	25	23	103	43	50	100	13
3. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, or Remained in School, Obtained a Certificate or Degree, or Drop-out-Returned to School		1,766	73.3%	16	85	37	15	80	41	117	90	51
4. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, or Military or Entered Employment		544	22.6%	9	81	47	7	81	45	66	113	1
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION												
1. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Excellent"		317	45.7%		22	183	25	20	3	17	32	
2. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Very Good"		283	40.8%		31	76	7	14	7	6	81	
3. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Average"		80	11.5%		14	8	1	9	3	1	14	
4. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Below Average"		11	1.6%		1	2	0	1	0	0	4	
5. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Poor"		2	0.3%		0	1	0	0	0	0	1	
6. Total Number of Surveys Completed		693	100.0%		68	270	33	44	13	24	132	

SFY 2023 MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM (MYP) DATA SUMMARY (JULY 1, 2022 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023)

COMBINED WDA TOTALS		TOTAL	PCT	WDA 9C	WDA 10	WDA 12	WDA 14D	WDA 14S	WDA 15	WDA 16	WDA 17	WDA 18
1. Total Participants Served		3,766		15	718	241	79	14	240	57	337	23
1a. Total Participants Exited		2,410		6	714	142	35	9	163	24	332	20
Gender	2a. Male	1,812	48.1%	6	292	121	59	9	131	41	153	14
	2b. Female	1,922	51.0%	9	414	118	20	5	108	16	181	9
	2c. Did Not Self-Identify	32	0.8%	0	12	2	0	0	1	0	3	0
Age	3a. 14 - 15	1,271	33.7%	2	506	20	29	2	40	24	265	0
	3b. 16 -17	1,214	32.2%	10	149	73	31	3	85	15	69	15
	3c. 18	525	13.9%	2	40	66	6	3	33	7	3	7
	3d. 19 - 21	537	14.3%	1	23	61	12	4	62	11	0	1
	3e. 22 - 24	198	5.3%	0	0	21	1	3	20	0	0	0
Ethnicity / Race	4a. Hispanic/Latino	541	14.4%	3	99	44	10	4	25	11	42	0
	4b. American Indian or Alaska Native	119	3.2%	0	17	3	8	0	5	2	0	0
	4c. Asian or Pacific Islander	235	6.2%	1	47	11	4	1	93	4	2	1
	4d. Black or African American	1,125	29.9%	1	421	60	14	3	75	4	187	4
	4e. White	1,756	46.6%	9	75	96	46	7	36	34	104	18
	4f. Multi Race	250	6.6%	2	71	26	2	3	19	3	8	1
Education Level	5a. Grades K-12 (No Diploma/GED)	2,878	76.4%	15	651	142	63	6	139	40	333	22
	5b. High School graduate or equivalent	674	17.9%	1	67	85	1	6	68	2	1	1
	5c. Post-Secondary Education	102	2.7%	0	0	1	0	2	15	1	0	0
Other Demographics	6. Limited English Proficient	235	6.2%	0	39	24	3	1	24	1	58	0
	7. Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	2,301	61.1%	3	636	139	39	5	148	20	264	15
	8. Foster Youth	177	4.7%	1	22	11	6	0	6	2	4	0
	9. Youth with a Disability	1,510	40.1%	11	159	128	65	10	219	40	106	21
	10. High School Drop-Out	646	17.2%	4	0	96	3	1	26	1	112	6
	11. Offender	193	5.1%	1	5	15	7	2	9	0	2	0
	12. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	171	4.5%	1	4	7	0	1	9	0	0	0
	13. Basic Skills Deficient	1,177	31.3%	1	0	34	16	9	63	11	139	5
	14. Homeless or Runaway Youth	186	4.9%	0	9	36	3	0	17	3	11	0
	15. Not Employed at Program Enrollment	2,448	65.0%	13	714	149	77	9	166	57	330	13
	PROGRAM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELATED ASSISTANCE											
1. Received Education/ Job Training Activities		1,757	46.7%	7	0	237	65	8	158	46	313	22
2. Received Work Experience Activities		2,079	55.2%	5	429	99	70	6	103	49	0	23
3. Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities		597	15.9%	0	0	1	70	0	26	46	313	0
4. Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities		1,657	44.0%	4	2	237	62	13	244	46	4	22
5. Received Mentoring Activities		374	9.9%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Received Support Services		354	9.4%	4	0	28	0	11	97	0	0	0
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE (Based on Number Served)												
1. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS		2,196	91.1%	5	710	71	26	2	100	23	317	20
2. Received Academic/Service Learning Credit		1,508	62.6%	0	648	36	28	2	79	22	296	20
3. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, or Remained in School, Obtained a Certificate or Degree, or Drop-out-Returned to School		1,766	73.3%	0	714	54	24	6	79	22	316	19
4. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, or Military or Entered Employment		544	22.6%	5	0	55	2	4	27	0	0	1
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION												
1. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Excellent"		317	45.7%			6						9
2. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Very Good"		283	40.8%			3						58
3. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Average"		80	11.5%			0						30
4. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Below Average"		11	1.6%			0						3
5. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Poor"		2	0.3%			0						0
6. Total Number of Surveys Completed		693	100.0%			9						100

MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM - RETURN ON INVESTMENT INFORMATION

State Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023)

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY '23)	WDA DATA
A. Unduplicated Count of MYP Enrollees	3,766
B. Total number of MYP termed	2,410
C. Total number of MYP terminees that returned to school	1,483
D. Total number of MYP terminees that were placed in jobs	434
E. Average wage at placement for MYP placements	\$16.57
F. Average number of hours per week for MYP placements	31
G. Total number of MYP placed in work experience	1,915
H. Average wage for those MYP placed in work experience	\$12.34
I. Average number of hours per week for MYP work experience	35
J. Total MYP expenses for the biennium	\$577,125
K. Total Annual Wages Earned by MYP Participants	\$16,555,036
L. Total Government Taxes Paid (est at 26.6%)	\$4,403,639
M. Est. Welfare Savings on Placements (Avg. \$6384)	\$2,966,390
N. Total Annual Return to Government	\$7,370,029
K. Positive Termination Rate	79.5%
L. Entered Employment Rate	18.0%
M. Return on Investment	\$12.77





MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM

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