

SFY 2024 Fortune Relief and Youth Empowerment Organization (FRAYEO)

Direct Appropriation

Final Report

1/8/2025

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

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[mn.gov/deed](https://mn.gov/deed/)

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# Introduction

The Minnesota State Legislature appropriated $250,000 to FRAYEO, Minnesota Community of African People with Disabilities, and Roots Connect. The $250,000 in funds were split across the organizations. DEED retained five percent of the appropriated funds for administration. Therefore, $79,167.00 was provided to FRAYEO to carry out the appropriation’s intent as stated in [Minnesota Session Laws – 2023, Chapter 53, S.F.3035, Article 20, Section 2, Subdivision 3 (vvv)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session%2BLaw/Chapter/53/) for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024. The grant proceeds are intended to provide funding for workforce development activities for at-risk youth from low-income families and unengaged young adults experiencing disabilities, including:

1. Job readiness training for at-risk youth & young adults, including resume building, interview skills, and job search strategies;
2. On-the-job training opportunities with local businesses;
3. Support services such as transportation assistance and childcare to help youth & Young adults attend job training programs; and
4. Mentorship and networking opportunities to connect youth with professionals in the youth’s desired fields.

# Summary of Goals and Objectives Presented in the Work Plan

The Shaqodoon project is dedicated to enhancing employment opportunities for East African youth in the Twin Cities. The project aimed to serve 50 youth in comprehensive workforce development activities. The primary goal is to facilitate equitable access to meaningful employment with fair wages while enabling employers to tap into a skilled workforce for in-demand positions. This will be accomplished through the implementation of an Employment Development Program tailored specifically for East African youth in the Twin Cities. The program encompasses culturally tailored, community-centered outreach initiatives, along with comprehensive employment preparation, and work readiness training. By focusing on this vital aspect of workforce development, the Shaqodoon project aims to foster sustainable economic empowerment and contribute to the overall growth and prosperity of East African communities in Minnesota.

# Program Activities

Described below are highlights of activities delivered during SFY 24.

* Upon entering the Shaqodoon program, we begin by conducting an intake session with the participant, during which they complete the Shaqodoon Intake Form. In this session, together with the participant we review the key information such as the participant's education level, English fluency, transportation needs (whether they have access to a car or rely on public transportation), as well as their skills and any previous work experience they may have.
* Following the intake phase, we develop a practical, short-term strategy/plan with each participant aimed at helping them secure livable wage employment. Once this plan is in place, participants will begin job search and placement activities.
* Participants will meet with a Career Developer or Program Coordinator either one-on-one or in small groups. During these sessions, they will complete job applications, develop resumes, and connect with potential employers. Additionally, we host small job fairs at our office, where participants are invited to meet with local employers and explore job opportunities.
* Participants who walk in or complete employment readiness training will receive assistance in finding both full-time and part-time job opportunities. They will learn effective job search techniques and strategies. The Career Developer and Program Coordinator will also connect participants with the necessary support services to help them secure jobs that align with their skills and needs. For participants interested in starting their own enterprise, we provide guidance and connect them with resources to help them navigate the process of launching and managing their business.
* After job placements, a Career Developer will follow up with participants and continue providing them with support they need to retain their job.

# Participant Data

The participant data for the SFY 24 performance period is below.

## Demographic Data

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC** | **NUMBER SERVED** |
| Total Served | 83 |
| Male | 50 |
| Female | 33 |
| Trans/Other | 0 |
| Age 12-13 | 0 |
| Age 14-15 | 0 |
| Age 16-17 | 2 |
| Age 18-19 | 3 |
| Age 20-28 | 78 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 0 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 0 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 0 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Black/African American | 83 |
| White | 0 |
| Multi-racial | 0 |
| Other/Unreported Race | 0 |
| 8th grade student or younger | Not collected |
| 9th-12th grade student | Not collected |
| High school graduate or equivalent  | Not collected |
| Post-secondary education student | Not collected |
| Family qualified for free or reduced-price school lunch | Not collected |

##

## Program Services, Activities, and Other Related Assistance

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SERVICE PROVIDED** | **NUMBER SERVED** |
| Education or Job Training Activities | 83 |
| Work Experience Activities | 83 |
| Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities | 0 |
| Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities | 83 |
| Mentoring Activities | 0 |
| Support Services | 0 |

# Program Outcome Measures

### The Shaqodoon program helped participants apply for jobs.

### 70% of participants found livable paying jobs.

### Five (5) percent of participants learned how to start their own business.

# Expenditure Data

Expenditures from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 were as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Budget Category** | **Expenditures** |
| Administration (up to 10% allowed) | $7,250.00 |
| Participant Wages and Fringe Benefits | $0.00 |
| Direct Staff Services | $65,017.00 |
| Support Services | $5,000.00 |
| Contracted Services | $1,900.00 |
| Total | $79,167.00 |

# Program Success Stories

**Bakar**

Bakar, a young adult from Somalia, faced significant challenges entering the U.S. workforce due to language barriers, technology issues, and transportation struggles. He felt discouraged after a long period of unemployment, unable to find any employers willing to hire him. Bakar shared that staying unemployed for so long had caused him considerable stress, and he was losing hope. At a critical moment, Bakar connected with the Shaqodoon program through the community at the Karamel mall, where he learned about the services we offer. With our support, Bakar navigated the job application process, created a resume, set up an email account, and was connected with various employers. With continued guidance, Bakar secured a job at Amazon in Shakopee, MN. We supported him through the onboarding process, helped him order the necessary job boots through Amazon’s website and today, he is happily employed earning a livable wage. Bakar now carpools with his coworkers and is able to support himself and his family back home. He feels less stressed, has the income to pay his bills, and is deeply grateful for the opportunity Shaqodoon provided.

**Yahye**

Yahye, a young adult with big dreams, faced barriers to finding employment in the Twin Cities, Minnesota. Limited networks and job search struggles made his path uncertain—until he found out about our program Shaqodoon. With personalized support, we connected Yahye to local employers and guided him through job applications. We successfully matched him with a role as a driver with UPS, earning a livable wage and ready to build a brighter future. We supported him throughout the onboarding process. “Shaqodoon didn’t just help me find a job to support my family —they helped me build a future,” Yahye says as he sets foot on his driving career. He stated that he wants to be a CDL Driver who will drive interstates. Yahye’s story is proof that with the right support, success is within reach!

**Galado**

Galado, a young woman from Djibouti, struggled to find work despite her talent and determination. We guided her through every step in her job search journey. With Shaqodoon’s support, she secured a warehouse job at Amazon and a henna artist position at the Somali Mall, where she currently works and showcases her creativity. “I never imagined I could have two jobs I love,” Galado shared. “Shaqodoon gave me the confidence to succeed.” Her story shows how resilience and the right support can open doors to opportunity!

**Kowsar**

Kowsar faced barriers in her job search. Barriers such as transportation issues. Without reliable means to commute, finding and keeping a job seemed like an uphill battle for her. That’s when Kowsar turned to Shaqodoon for help. Our team worked with Kowsar to overcome her transportation barrier, ultimately finding her a full-time position at Target, conveniently located near her home. This solved her transportation issues and gave her a fresh start. After working at Target, Kowsar saved enough to buy her first car—a huge milestone in her journey. With her newfound mobility, Shaqodoon continued to support Kowsar, helping her secure a second job within the community. Today, Kowsar holds two livable-wage paying jobs, allowing her to rent her own place and live independently. Reflecting on her journey, Kowsar said, “After coming to America, the second best thing that happened to me is finding the Shaqodoon program.” Kowsar’s story is a powerful testament to perseverance and the transformative impact of meaningful support. She is now financially stable, independent, and thriving.

**Abubakar**

Abubakar had a passion for carpentry but didn’t know how to turn it into a business. With support from the Shaqodoon team, we successfully helped him register his business “AbuuCraft LLC” and gained access to valuable small business resources. Abubakar now works with small businesses in the East African community that is in need of carpentry services, and his dream is to grow his business and hire youth, creating job opportunities and bringing them into the construction industry. Abubakar is building a thriving business and a brighter future for his community!