

Youthprise: Pan African Youth Economic

Development Grant

## Final Report

## 10/16/2024

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

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As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report cost approximately $700 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

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# Introduction

In state fiscal years 2023 and 2024, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated $3.7 million in state funds to Youthprise to “to provide economic development services designed to enhance long-term economic self-sufficiency in communities with concentrated African populations.”

**Legislative Appropriations**

In state fiscal year 2023, Youthprise received $665,000 in state funds after allowing the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to use five percent of the appropriation to administer the grant. After allowing Youthprise to use up to 10% of funds for administration of the grant at the local level, $598,500 was competitively awarded to 18 sub-grantees through an open Request for Proposal (RPR) process. At least fifty percent of the awarded amount was targeted to programming in Greater Minnesota.

In state fiscal year 2024, Youthprise received $2,850,000 in state funds after allowing the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to use five percent of the appropriation to administer the grant. After allocating 10% of funds for its administration of the grant at the local level, Youthprise granted half of the remaining funds or $1,282,500 to Ka Joog. The remaining half of the grant funds were competitively awarded to 26 community organizations through an open Request for Proposal (RPR) process.

The Minnesota Legislation is referenced in the 2[023 Session Laws, Chapter 53, S.F. 3035.](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/53/)

**Request for Proposal Process**

Youthprise released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for SFY 2023 grant funds in February of 2022 and closed the RFP in March of 2022. Funding decisions were made in April of 2022 and sub-grants were issued for the period January 1st, 2023, to June 30th, 2024.

Youthprise released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for SFY 2024 grant funds on December 19, 2023 and closed the RFP at the end of January, 2024. Final funding decisions were made in April and sub-grants were issued for the period May 1st, 2024, to April 30th, 2025.

# Summary of Objectives and Performance Measures

The purpose of the Pan African Youth Economic Development Grant Program is to reduce disparities and to allow the acquisition of self-sufficiency through:

* Career exploration and career planning
* Work readiness training
* Occupational or vocational job training
* Job placement``

# Grant Selection Process

In keeping with its commitment to youth and community voice, Youthprise engaged in a two-stage review process regarding the proposals received by Youthprise in response to the RFP. In the first stage of the selection process, community reviewer panels composed of youth, Pan African community members, and other stakeholders made recommendations for funding. In the second stage, Youthprise staff reviewed the recommendations from the community review panels and made recommendations for sub-grant awards based on financial capacity and programmatic capacity. The list of selected sub-grantees was sent to the Youthprise Board of Directors for final award decisions.

# Expenditures

The terms of the SFY 2023 and SFY 2024 Direct Appropriation grant agreements, which were issued and implemented over the period July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025. Youthprise has expended 100% of SFY 2023 Direct Appropriation grant funds, and is currently expending SFY 2024 grant funds, which are anticipated to be fully expended by June 30, 2025.

| Budget Category | Total SFY 2023 Grant Amount | Amount Expended through June 30, 2024 | Percent Expended through June 30, 2024 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Administrative Costs (up to 10% allowed) | $66,500.00 | $66,500.00 | 100% |
| Contracted Services | $598,500.00 | $598,500.00 | 100% |
| **Total Budget** | **$665,000.00** | **$665,000.00** | 100% |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Budget Category | Total SFY 2024 Grant Amount | Amount Expended through September 30, 2024 | Percent Expended through September 30, 2024 |
| Administrative Costs (up to 10% allowed) | $285,000.00 | $134,158.97 | 47% |
| Contracted Services | $2,565,000.00 | $186,610.43 | 7.3% |
| **Total Budget** | **$2,850,000.00** | **$320,769.40** | 11.3% |

# Selected Grantees

The SFY 2023 Direct Appropriation funds were competitively awarded to eighteen (18) Minnesota organizations serving East African youth populations over a contract period May 2023 to June 2024. Eleven are located in the metropolitan area. Eight grantees are located in Greater Minnesota and received $330,000 or slightly over half of the state DEED funds.

| **SFY 2023**  **Organization Name** | **Area Served** | **Purpose/Mission** | **SFY 2023**  **Total Amount** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **African Community Services** | Minneapolis | Help refugees from and West Africa as well as other cultures, plus their families, secure basic needs and resources for self‐sufficiency and acclimate to a new way of life. | $20,000.00 |
| **Afro Economic Development Solutions** | St. Paul | Build wealth within African immigrant communities through economic development activities. AEDS works throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area to create wealth, lift immigrant communities out of poverty, and contribute to and benefit from the region’s vibrant economy. | $25,000.00 |
| **Afro American Development Association** | Moorhead | Alleviate poverty by supporting vulnerable New Americans and other diverse communities by building family and community capacity through training, sustainable development, economic empowerment, conflict resolution and peace building. | $85,000.00 |
| **BRAVE Foundation** | St. Paul | Dedicated in the upliftment and encouragement of young women within the Somali diaspora community. | $20,000.00 |
| **Community Integration Center** | Willmar | Work with the locals, immigrants and government agencies to reach out, in the best possible way, to make a full integration of immigrants. | $20,000.00 |
| **Ethnic Self-Help Alliance for Refugee Assistance (ESHARA)** | St. Paul | Entrepreneurial training, mentoring, career exploration, job placement, leadership, and support. | $31,750.00 |
| **Islamic Civic Society of America** | Minneapolis | Create positive change for Minnesota by building the capacity of African immigrant families and faith centers to understand and influence key public issues affecting current and future success. | $25,000.00 |
| **Ka Joog** | Minneapolis | Help Somali youth understand their options and make good choices through mentoring, tutoring, and job readiness training. | $85,000.00 |
| **Milestone Community Development** | St. Paul | Workforce training and support of African youth. | $5,000.00 |
| **Minnesota Council of Churches** | Minneapolis | Mentoring and building the confidence of African youth to develop workforce and career networks into adulthood. | $20,000.00 |
| **New Vision Foundation** | St. Paul | Create pathways to success by motivating disadvantaged youth in Minnesota and the developing world through digital literacy; engaging responsible companies in IT philanthropy and inspiring progress toward global sustainable development. | $60,000.00 |
| **Northfield Healthy Community Initiative** | Northfield | Cultivate a collaborative community that supports, values, and empowers youth. | $40,000.00 |
| **Somalia American Social Service Association** | Rochester | Rebuild the Somali youth of Olmsted County through education, physical activities, and programs that promote success. | $25,000.00 |
| **Somali Community Resettlement Services** | Faribault | Promote and advance the social well-being and welfare of immigrants and refugees by providing community and resettlement services; with the goal of building a vibrant community, whose members can successfully settle and effectively integrate into the wider American community. | $60,000.00 |
| **South Sudanese Foundation** | Moorhead | Build relationships and share services and resources within the community and other communities in the area. | $75,000.00 |
| **Street Soccer Twin Cities** | Minneapolis | Create a better, healthier, more united community; providing year-round free access to organized physical activities with youth development focused programming designed to empower youth voice. | $25,000.00 |
| **Urban Strategies, Inc.** | Minneapolis | Developing social enterprise in youth through entrepreneurship, work readiness training, mentoring, tutoring and support services to address barriers. | $25,000.00 |
| **YWCA Mankato** | Mankato | Provide youth with workforce, college and career readiness, local business speakers, and support for ACT preparation. Also offer *Handball to University* hands-on experiences to High School students to get a feeling of what it would be like to experience the college. | $25,000.00 |
| **Total awarded in SFY 2023 grant funds (includes additional funds from Youthprise )** | | | **$671,750.00** |

The SFY 2024 Direct Appropriation funds were competitively awarded to 26 Minnesota organizations serving Pan African youth populations, which began programming in May of 2024. Seven grantees are located in Greater Minnesota and received $329,997 in funding. Nineteen grantees are located in the metropolitan area and received about $969,722.21 in funding.

| **SFY 2024**  **Organization Name** | **Area Served** | **Purpose/Mission** | **SFY 2024**  **Total Amount** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **826MSP** | Minneapolis | Enhance literacy, writing skills, career exploration, communication, social-emotional skills (related to the workplace) in 40 children and youth through daily writing practice within a supportive *826MPS After School Writing Lab*. Goal of 90% being published authors or completing creative projects each semester. | $35,000.00 |
| **Achieve Twin Cities** | Twin Cities | *Achieve Twin Cities* *Career and College Readiness* coordinators work closely with 80 Heritage STEM Academy students and about 780 Pan African students in Minneapolis (South, Southwest, Washburn, and Roosevelt) and St. Paul (Como and Central) students, with a focus on about 200 Pan African juniors and rising seniors. Students will be prepared to successfully transition to post-secondary degree or training programs, or employment with work readiness skills and an understanding of career pathways and planning. | $75,000.00 |
| **Aim Academy of Science and Technology (AAST)** | Minneapolis | Through *Aim Academy’s Youth Career Exploration and Internship Program*, 175 youth, grades 6-12, explore career options through field trips, embedded class experiences, employment, internships, and/or PSEO certificate training. | $75,000.00 |
| **BRAVE Foundation** | St. Paul | Dedicated in the upliftment and encouragement of young women within the Somali diaspora community. | $35,000.00 |
| **Center for African Immigrants and Refugees Organization (CAIRO)** | St. Cloud | MySTEP – Minnesota Youth Skills Training and Employment Pathways – project provides black immigrant and refugee youth, aged 14 to 24, with the necessary tools, resources, support, and knowledge for future successful careers in high-growth and in demand occupations. Career Pathway Agents work with youth to explore careers and develop life and career goals. | $67,500.00 |
| **East African Integration Center (EAIC)** | Minneapolis | Provide 40 African immigrant youth with career and work readiness skills, mentoring, guidance and support, youth leaderships skills, and improved confidence to successfully transition to post-secondary education or employment. | $34,480 |
| **Encouraging Leaders** | Minneapolis | Provide 60 African immigrant youth, ages 18-24, with work readiness skills, self-sufficiency planning skills, support services, and employment. Host an African Immigrant Gala to enhance cultural connection and networking. | $35,000 |
| **Ethnic Self-Help Alliance for Refugee Assistance (ESHARA)** | St. Paul | In partnership with Twin Cities Youth Soccer Club, ESHARA will directly serve 20 youth in gaining employment and providing another 200 youth with work readiness, mentoring, career exploration, networking, and support services. | $35,000 |
| **Fahan Organization** | St. Cloud | Increase pre-employment skills, school engagement, and graduation rates for 20 to 25 Somali high school students with disabilities and/or IEPs. Provide 6 to 8 Somali students with disabilities and/or IEPs with leadership training, and opportunities for feedback and advice on curriculum and programs as members of a Somali Youth Advisory Board. | $35,000 |
| **Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC)** | Minneapolis | Empower 20 Pan African youth to achieve sustainable employment and career success through holistic education, mentoring, and practical experiences in STEM fields. Ten youth will be recruited to develop *LakeStreet Youth Labs Advisory Council* and two youth will be hired as Apprentice Guides at the *Youth Lab* August summer camp. | $73,312.50 |
| **Higher Ground Academy (HGA)** | St. Paul | Work with 20 HGA 10th and 11th graders for two weeks in the summer to create at l 15 brief case studies regarding career professionals and hold a celebration and presentation of case studies with stakeholders to share results. Expand shadow studies and internships for an additional 30 HGA students. | $35,000 |
| **Horn of Africa Development and Education (HADEF)** | Minneapolis | Provide 150 African immigrant youth with education access, mentoring, career readiness, industry-certified vocational training, and guidance in HADEF’s *Empowering Dreams* program. Assist in job placement for 30 youth and post-secondary education or training for 20 youth. | $35,000 |
| **Isuroon** | Minneapolis | Empower 30 Somali youth, ages 14-21, to develop careers that work for them through career exploration, journaling, field trips, and support for complete post-secondary education and training applications and financial aid forms. | $67,480.20 |
| **Northfield Healthy Community Initiative** | Northfield | Support 100 youth, ages 14-24, in Rice County to remain in and graduate from high school. Through the African Scholars initiative and staff mentoring, tutoring, and support, students will plan their future goals (“Pathway to the Future” plan) and engage in career exploration, work experience, service learning, business and college field trips, internships, employment, and college enrollment. | $75,000 |
| **Kilimo** | Minneapolis | Engage 15 youth in *Renewing the Countryside* project, hands-on learning through sustainable agriculture practices and farming activities, selling produce at the Mill City Farmer’s Market, cooking demonstrations, community engagement and Photovoice Campaign of storytelling and to advocacy. | $34,979.20 |
| **Minnesota Urban Debate League (MUDL)** | Minneapolis | African debate coaches mentor and support 150 middle- and high school youth from Minneapolis and St. Paul to participate in debate tournaments and gain academic and social-emotional skills, and community engagement. | $71,340.90 |
| **Mothers Tutoring Academy** | St. Paul | Support 250 African immigrant youth in Eden Prairie, St. Paul, and Minneapolis to improve academic skills, attendance, and confidence through tutoring, mentoring, family engagement, and youth development and community support activities. | $35,000 |
| **Phumulani** | Brooklyn Park | Provide 90 African immigrant youth with work readiness, career training, workshops, mentorship, language support, community engagement, and trauma-informed care. | $32,778.59 |
| **Smart North** | Minneapolis | Provide 50 African immigrant youth programming at Smart North’s *Community Tech Hub* in Sabathani Community Center. | $35,000.00 |
| **Somalia American Social Service Association** | Rochester | Recruit 20 youth from *SASSA’s* *After School* programto build a 12-month student cohort trained in business concepts, employment, and financial planning. Students also receive mentoring, presentations, job fairs visits. | $35,000.00 |
| **Somali Community Resettlement Services** | Faribault | Assist 30 at-risk African youth to create a career plan, gain technical and soft skills, and industry-recognized credentials in a chosen career pathway, financial literacy skills, work experience, internships, employment, and support services. | $74,785.20 |
| **Somali Youth and Family Development Center (SOMFAM)** | Minneapolis | Assist 45 African youth in A*frican Girls Taking Action* and *Boys of Hope* after school programs, including goal setting, college preparation, mentoring, tutoring, guest speakers, events, job fairs, businesses and colleges tours, networking, and support. | $30,846.41 |
| **South Sudanese Foundation** | Moorhead | Prepare 500 African youth in the Fargo-Moorhead area for living wage jobs. Activities include education support, life skills, financial literacy, work readiness, industry-recognized credentialed training (C.N.A., forklift, and childcare provider). | $75,000.00 |
| **Street Soccer Twin Cities (SSTC)** | Minneapolis | SSTC’s Economic Development League will assist over 100 youth in obtaining new or first-time employment, sustainable jobs, a personal bank account, mentoring, work readiness and financial literacy skills, and explore careers. | $35,000.00 |
| **Urban Strategies, Inc.** | Minneapolis | Provide 75 youth with workforce training in eco-SEM, eco-Arts, entrepreneurship, and cooking/gardening, professional development and mentoring from culturally competent adults, and work experience in the Green Garden Bakery operations. | $75,000.00 |
| **YWCA Mankato** | Mankato | Provide 30 youth with college and career exploration an+-d support to successfully transition to a post-secondary university or college program. Activities also include weekly handball games and a December tournament. | $34,997.00 |
| **Total awarded in SFY 2024 grant funds** | | | **$1,282,500.00** |

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# Ka Joog Programming and Partners

Ka Joog received a $1,282,500 grant from Youthprise and subsequently partnered with five Minneapolis organizations to serve African immigrant youth. Ka Joog used $354,250 of the allocation for its own programming., awarded $725,000 to following entities which began programming in the summer of 2024, and has $75,000 remaining that is yet to be allocated.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organization Name** | **Area Served** | **Purpose/Mission** | **SFY 2024**  **Total Amount** |
| **African Immigrant Community Services (AICS)** | Minneapolis | Provide 31 New American youth with work readiness and cultural skills training, support services, and a two-week paid internship opportunity to 18 African youth . | $200,000 |
| **Center for Women in Excellence** | Minneapolis | Provide 15 New American youth with job readiness training and support services. Engage 50 African immigrant youth in Smart North’s Community Tech Hub programming and services at Sabathani Community Center. | $100,000 |
| **Generation Hope** | Minneapolis | Provide 50 to 70 youth with culturally specific addiction recovery and mental health services and education. Expand the Peer Recovery program to provide mentoring and support, engage youth in workforce development initiatives and strengthen community engagement to foster support, economic stability, and recovery. | $100,000 |
| **New American Development Center** | Minneapolis | Provide 30 youth with workforce training, internships, and , as needed, laptops to increase economic self-sufficiency in youth. | $275,000 |
| **Success Leadership Center** | Minneapolis | Assist over 20 African immigrant youth, ages 18-25, with job search, career planning and guidance, mentoring, and vocational training referrals. SOFAM’s A*frican Girls Taking Action* and *Boys of Hope* programming. After school activities include goal setting, college preparation, mentoring, group outings, tutoring, guest speakers, tours of businesses and colleges, job fairs, networking, and support. Goals include 95% will graduate from high school and 90% will be accepted into college. | $50,000 |
| **Total awarded in SFY 2024 grant funds** | | | **$725,000.00** |

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# Monitoring

Youthprise staff monitor grant programming and financial operations of sub-grantee organizations which must adhere to Youthprise policies, procedures, and reporting requirements. Every three months, quarterly data and narrative reports are submitted by sub-grantees to Youthprise staff. Youthprise submits the reports quarterly to DEED’s Office of Youth Development. Note, DEED requested additional data on SFY 2024 participants' characteristics and outcomes. Thus, minor variations exist between data sets for SFY 2023 and SFY 2024 grants. DEED staff annually monitors Youthprise for compliance with state and federal laws and regulations and regarding fiscal and program operations and performance.

# Evaluation and Data

Youthprise evaluates the grantmaking process to determine to what extent it reaches the appropriate organizations in the geographic areas of the state with significant African populations. Since January 1, 2023, Youthprise has been successful in reaching 1,991 Pan African youth (31% of the total youth served) in the Twin Cities and in the cities and surrounding areas of St. Cloud, Faribault, Mankato, Moorhead, Northfield, Pease, Rochester, and Willmar. Eight of the eighteen SFY 2023 grant-awarded organizations were located in Greater Minnesota and received 53% of SFY 2023 DEED funding available. Six out of 26 SFY 2024 grant-awarded organizations were located in Greater Minnesota and received 12% of SFY 2024 DEED funding available.

# Participant Demographics and Performance Outcomes

The SFY 2023 and SFY 2024 Youthprise Direct Appropriation grants served a total of 6,500 Minnesota youth over the period January 1st, 2023, to June 30th, 2024.

Of the 986 youth served in SFY 2023, 92% identified as Pan African/African Immigrant; about 20% were placed in internships or apprenticeships, 30% obtained unsubsidized employment, and 13% earned industry-recognized occupational credentials.

Of the 1,180 participating under the recent SFY 2024 grant, almost half (546) were Pan African youth served by one sub-grantee organization, *Achieve Twin Cities*. Of the remaining 25 subgrantee organizations funded in SFY 2024, 92% of its 634 participants identified as Pan African/African Immigrant. Since SFY 2024 programming began recently, reporting on youth performance outcomes reflects only two months of participation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AFRICAN IMMIGRANT YOUTH CAREER DEVEOLOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM**  **Participant Demographic Characteristics** | **January 1, 2023 to**  **March 31, 2024**  **(SFY2023 Grant)**  **18 YOUTHPRISE Subgrants** | **May 1, 2024 to**  **June 30, 2024**  **SFY2024**  **26 YOUTHPRISE**  **Subgrants** | **May 1, 2024 to**  **June 30, 2024**  **SFY2024 grant to**  **KA JOOG and 5 Partners** |
| **TOTAL SERVED** | 986 | 1,180 | 60 |
| Male | 46% | 57% | 90% |
| Female | 54% | 43% | 10% |
| Non-Binary or Transgender | < 1% | < 1% | 0% |
| Age 14-17 | 62% | 79% | 17% |
| Age 18-21 | 36% | 19% | 63% |
| Age 22-24 | 2.5% | 2% | 17% |
| Age 25 and older | < 1% | < 1% | 6% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 0% | 2% | 0% |
| American Indian/ Alaskan Native | 0% | 1% | 0% |
| Asian/ Pacific Islander | 0% | 1% | 0% |
| Black | 92% | 92% | 98% |
| Pan African/African Immigrant | 92% | 92% | 98% |
| White | < 1% | < 1% | 2% |
| Multi-racial | 1% | 19% | 0% |
| From Family Receiving Public Assistance | NA | 66% | 90% |
| Limited English Proficiency | NA | 26% | 47% |
| Youth with a Disability | NA | 6% | 40% |
| Youth Offender | NA | 1% | 35% |
| Pregnant or Teen Parent | NA | 1% | 0% |
| Basic Skills Deficient | NA | 7% | 8% |
| Homeless, Runaway or Aging Out of Foster Care | NA | 0% | 0% |
| Not Employed at Enrollment | NA | 31% | 37% |
| Low Income or Economically Disadvantaged | NA | 80% | 98% |
| Veteran | NA | < 1% | 0% |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Participant Services Received and**  **Performance Outcomes** | **January 1, 2023 to**  **March 31, 2024**  **(SFY2023 Grant)**  **18 YOUTHPRISE Subgrants** | **May 1, 2024 to**  **June 30, 2024**  **SFY2024**  **26 YOUTHPRISE**  **Subgrants** | **May 1, 2024 to**  **June 30, 2024**  **SFY2024 grant to**  **KA JOOG and 5 Partners** |
| Received Education, Work Preparation, or Skills Training | 43% | 31% | 70% |
| Received Work Experience or Work Based Learning | 40% | 11% | 57% |
| Received Career Exploration Career Planning | 45% | 80% | 58% |
| Obtained an Internship and Apprenticeship | 19% | 7% | 0% |
| Received Entrepreneurship Training or Activities | 19% | NA | NA |
| Received Mentoring Services | 89% | 34% | 45% |
| Received Other Services | 63% | NA | NA |
| Received Case Managed Services | 100% | 17% | 57% |
| Received Follow Up Services | NA | 13% | 65% |
| Received Support Services | NA | 30% | 42% |
| Received Transportation Support | 31% | NA | NA |
| Received Housing Support | 9% | NA | NA |
| Received Education Support | 66% | NA | NA |
| Received Language Support | 19% | NA | NA |
| Received Community Involvement or Leadership Activities | NA | 16% | 3% |
| Placed in African Run Business Internships and Apprenticeships | 16% | NA | NA |
| Placed in Employment | 28% | 13% | 25% |
| Attained Work Readiness Goals | NA | 60% | 47% |
| Attained Education Goals | NA | 12% | 40% |
| African Run Business Job Placement | 7% | NA | NA |
| Obtained Sustaining Employment | 30% | NA | NA |
| Earned Family-Sustaining Wages | 13% | NA | NA |
| Earned Diploma or Education Credentials | 13% | 8% | 25% |
| Earned Academic Credit in Program | NA | 7% | 0% |
| Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education or Occupational Training | NA | 10% | 3% |
| Earned Industry-Recognized Occupational Credential, Certificate or Degree | 13% | 4% | 0% |
| Entered Registered Apprenticeship or Union Pre-Apprenticeship Program | NA | 4% | 0% |
| Exited the Program | NA | 2% | 3% |

# Sub-Grantee Success Stories

Success stories during the past year include:

* Somali Community Resettlement Services hosted a Mental Health First Aid class led by a certified instructor from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.
* An Urban Strategies participant completed a glassblowing internship over the summer, for credit recovery and to explore pursuing this trade as a career. They also received a week-long scholarship to Corning School of Glass in New York.
* An East African Integration Center participant successfully passed all three CDL permit exams bringing him closer to a promising career in the trucking industry. With support from program staff during weekly study sessions, he overcame challenges and demonstrated remarkable determination, inspiring other participants and showcasing the program’s transformative power.
* Smart North’s Community Tech Hub youth participants showed growing confidence throughout their time at the Hub, trying out new skills such as 3-D printing or the music lab, and engaging more with staff and peers.
* Heritage STEM Academy’s Career and College Readiness Coordinator, Munira Mohamed, has developed trusting, long-time relationships with Heritage families during her seven years, allowing her to better support students around the complex logistics of graduation and preparing for life after high school. Her unique insights into the needs and values of these young people and their families have been especially important this year due to the many difficulties related to the FAFSA.
* AIM Academy of Science and Technology held an ‘Educational and Vocational Guidance’ program for all 8th Graders to prepare and guide students for high school success. It resulted in about 90% of the students signing up in the Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS), sharing their readiness for high school and determination to pursue post-secondary education.
* Kilimo participants worked as a team to plant a communal garden. Each youth developed individual project themes by planting their favorite crop to express their identity and learned to care for their garden.
* All twenty Isuroon participants achieved their personal job search objectives and developed crucial workplace skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. Several participants secured part-time employment, marking a pivotal step towards their long-term career aspiration and 15 participants completed their high school diplomas or GEDs, demonstrating a commitment to academic achievement alongside their vocational training.
* ESHARA received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the parents of the youth participants. Parents noticed significant life improvements since their children started the program, such as more energy and connection to and commitment to excelling academically and professionally.
* Upon enrolling in Mother’s Tutoring Academy, Manal faced significant challenges in accessing a quality high school education, struggling with grades, and a lack of confidence in school. Through personalized tutoring sessions tailored to Manal's learning needs and strengths, educating her parents on the academic system and how to continue the support at home, as well as the dedicated team of educators, mentorship, and encouragement, Manal has shown tremendous growth and achievement. Manal has become a role model within the community, inspiring peers and younger students to pursue their dreams despite obstacles. She has shown remarkable resilience and determination. Recently, she achieved a major milestone: gaining admission to the University of Minnesota's Kinesiology track.