SFY 2021 Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program

Progress Report

5/11/2022

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

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[mn.gov/deed](https://mn.gov/deed/" \o "DEED website)

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## Background

Under the Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnership (MJSP) six percent funds, $1,000,000 dollars was made available in late 2020 for the Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program. The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) retained five percent of these funds for administration and monitoring, making the total amount available for grant awards $950,000.

The Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program is a competitive grant program that sought proposals from qualified responders to develop and implement short-term career readiness, work experience, and employment programs for young adults. Through the work of the selected grantees, the goal of the program is to serve 200 young adults (age 18-25), in the seven-county metro area, targeting low-income individuals.

### Grant Requirements

Eligible applicants were nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and tribal governments that have an existing current contract with DEED. Preference was given to organizations with demonstrated effectiveness in delivering services in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and to organizations that have demonstrated effectiveness with conducting employer engagement and job placements.

The proposed programs must provide the following services:

• Outreach, participant recruitment and assessment

• Training including, career readiness and life skills training, such as financial and digital literacy

• Age specific, short-term, paid work experience opportunities

• Case management and support services

• Post program follow-up

### Overview of the Request for Proposals Process

DEED developed a Request For Proposals (RFP) to award the Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program grant funds. This RFP was posted on DEED’s website on November 19, 2020 under [Grant and Contract Opportunities](https://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/). Applications were due by 4:00 p.m. on December 18, 2020.

The DEED Communications team notified individuals, organizations, and an extensive list of interested parties regarding the release of the RFP for the Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program. The Youth Development team also shared the RFP with their networks. Pursuant to State law, the State Register included information about RFPs available through DEED.

The RFP directed potential applicants to submit all questions on the RFP via e-mail to a specified DEED contact. Questions submitted in writing were answered on a weekly basis and published on DEED’s Grant and Contract Opportunities website.

## Grantees

Thirteen (13) proposals were submitted to DEED by December 18 deadline, representing over $3.14 million in funding requests. All proposals were read and scored by a team of trained reviewers. Each proposal was evaluated on a 100-point scale, as outlined in the RFP. The following organizations were selected to receive grant funds for the Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organization** | **Area Served** | **Grant Award** | **Number of Individuals to be Served** |
| HIRED | North Minneapolis, and suburbs of Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center | $200,000 | 40 |
| Tree Trust | Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area | $249,332 | 53 |
| African Immigrants Community Services | Twin Cities (focus in Cedar-Riverside and Phillips neighborhoods) | $233,336 | 50 |
| Somali Community Resettlement Services of Olmsted County | Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area | $267,332 | 57 |
|  | **Total:** | **$950,000** | **200** |

### Project Descriptions

**HIRED - Training for Tomorrow Program, $200,000**

HIRED’s Training for Tomorrow Program primarily serves low-income youth of color with multiple barriers to employment. The program focuses on serving individuals from North Minneapolis, and surrounding suburbs including Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center. The program provides one-on-one career readiness, life skills, job readiness, and technology training. This training is paired with a paid work experience opportunity in manufacturing, customer service, or other in demand industries. Medtronic is a major employer partner that will provide work experience opportunities in the manufacturing sector.

Website: [www.hired.org](http://www.hired.org)

Address: 217 North Fifth Avenue, Third Floor, Minneapolis, MN 55401

*Local Contact: Julie Brekke, 612-808-9500,* [Julie.brekke@hired.org](mailto:Julie.brekke@hired.org)

**Tree Trust –** **Branches, $249,332**

Tree Trust’s Career Pathways – Branches Program serves low-income, displaced workers, and previously incarcerated individuals with a focus serving on BIPOC communities throughout the Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area. The program provides participants career readiness, financial literacy, and life skills training. Participants will also receive paid on-the-job training and work experience that will lead to an industry recognized Tree Care Apprentice Certificate and preparation for jobs in tree care, landscaping, and the tree management industry.

Website: [www.treetrust.org](http://www.treetrust.org)

Address: 1419 Energy Park Dr, Saint Paul, MN 55108

*Local Contact: Jared Smith, 952-767-3891,* [jareds@treetrust.org](mailto:jareds@treetrust.org)

**African Immigrants Community Services -** **Youth Technology Employment, $233,336**

The Youth Technology Employment program provides serves low-income Somali and East African individuals in the Twin Cities, specifically focused on serving those from the Cedar-Riverside and Phillips neighborhoods of Minneapolis. The program provides IT career pathway or phlebotomy training, along with financial literacy training prior to a paid internship. The IT career pathway training includes training in areas such as web design and development, graphic design, UX/UI design, digital marketing, database administration, Word press, and coding.

Website: [www.aicsmn.org](http://www.aicsmn.org)

Address: 1433 E. Franklin Avenue, Suite 13B, Minneapolis, MN 55404

*Local Contact: Mohamed Ahmed, 952-457-8991,* [m.ahmed@aicsmn.org](mailto:m.ahmed@aicsmn.org)

**Somali Community Resettlement Services -** **East African Employment Accessibility, $267,332**

The East African Employment Accessibility program serves low-income individuals from east African and Somali Communities throughout the Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area. The program focuses on training in Healthcare, Information Technology, and general career exploration. Program training includes career readiness, basic computer training, basic health training such as first aid and CPR, food service training for ServSafe, and life skills training. In addition to training, the program provides participants placement into paid work experiences and support services to eliminate barriers to education and employment.

Website: [www.somalcrs.org](http://www.somalcrs.org)

Address: 4020 Minnehaha Ave, Suite 2070, Minneapolis, MN 55406

*Local Contact: Abdullah Hared, 612-353-6380,* [anhared@somalcrs.org](mailto:anhared@somalcrs.org)

## Program Data

The Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program demographic, activity, and outcome data that is included in this report reflects the cumulative totals of all 4 grantees. Three grants were extended by a quarter and concluded at the end of March 2022. The data below is final for the four grants and covers the period from the start of the grant contracts, in mid-February 2021, through the end of the grant contracts, March 31, 2022.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program**  **Demographic, Activity, and Outcome Data - – (Mid-Feb 2021 – March 31, 2022)** | | | |
| Total Individual Participants Served | | 163 | |
| **Demographic Data** | | **Total** | **Percentage** |
| **Gender** | Male | 71 | 43.6% |
| Female | 92 | 56.4% |
| **Age** | 18 | 18 | 11.0% |
| 19 – 20 | 55 | 33.7% |
| 21 – 24 | 79 | 48.5% |
| 25 | 11 | 6.7% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | Hispanic/Latino | 3 | 1.8% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2 | 1.2% |
| Asian | 2 | 1.2% |
| Black or African American | 140 | 85.9% |
| Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.0% |
| Multiracial | 4 | 2.5% |
| White | 12 | 7.4% |
| **Education Level** | High School diploma or GED | 110 | 67.5% |
| Post-Secondary Education | 52 | 31.9% |
| **Other Demographics** | Limited English Proficient | 14 | 8.6% |
| Receiving Public Assistance | 71 | 43.6% |
| Foster Youth (or aged out of foster care) | 1 | 0.6% |
| Participant with a Disability | 2 | 1.2% |
| School Dropout | 0 | 0.0% |
| Offender (previous juvenile justice involvement) | 9 | 5.5% |
| Pregnant or Parenting | 11 | 6.7% |
| Basic Skills Deficient | 9 | 5.5% |
| Homeless | 14 | 8.6% |
| Not Employed at Program Enrollment | 99 | 60.7% |
| Veteran | 0 | 0.0% |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 118 | 72.4% |
| **Program Services and Activities Data** | | **Total** | **Percentage** |
| Received Employment Preparation, or Work Readiness/Job Training Activities | | 159 | 97.5% |
| Received Work Experience, Internship, or Apprenticeship Activities | | 121 | 74.2% |
| Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities | | 159 | 97.5% |
| Received Case Management | | 159 | 97.5% |
| Received Support Services | | 90 | 55.2% |
| **Performance and Outcome Data** | | **Total** | **Percentage** |
| Work Readiness - Attained Work Readiness skills | | 159 | 97.5% |
| Work Readiness - Attained Education Goals | | 105 | 64.4% |
| Placement - Entered Post-Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, or Military | | 57 | 35.0% |
| Placement - Entered employment | | 111 | 68.1% |
| Credential – Earned occupational certificates/licenses, industry recognized credentials | | 69 | 42.3% |
| Credential - Earn Post-secondary degree/diploma | | 13 | 8.0% |
| **Participant Satisfaction Data** | | **Total** | **Percentage  (of responses)** |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Excellent” | | 47 | 37.9% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Very Good” | | 55 | 44.4% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Average” | | 16 | 12.9% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Below Average” | | 4 | 3.2% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Poor” | | 2 | 1.6% |
| Total Number of Surveys Completed | | 124 | 100.0% |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Employer and Wage Data for Participants that Entered Employment** | |
| Average Starting Wage  Range: $12.00 - $25.00 | $16.57 |
| Total Number of Reported Employers | 57 |
| **Top 5 Employers** (Complete List see Appendix A) | **Participants Employed** |
| Medtronic | 12 |
| Nice Guys Corporation | 9 |
| BB Home Health | 5 |
| Target | 4 |
| Amazon | 3 |

## Expenditures

Contracts for the Minnesota Economic Recovery Jobs Program were executed in mid-February 2021. Final expenditures, reported through March 31, 2022, are in the following table.

| Entity | Allocation | Expenditures  (through 3/31/22) | Percent Expended  (through 3/31/22) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| HIRED | $200,000.00 | $199,995.13 | 100.0% |
| Tree Trust\* | $151,500.00 | $124,768.27 | 82.4% |
| African Immigrants Community Services | $233,336.00 | $206,814.07 | 88.6% |
| Somali Community Resettlement Services | $267,332.00 | $255,268.00 | 95.5% |
| **Grantee Total** | **$852,168.00** | **$786,845.47** | **92.3%** |

\*Tree Trust's original contract was for $249,332 but in September 2021 they de-obligated $97,832. The expenditure table reflects the new grant amount that is under contract.

## Highlights and Success Stories

#### HIRED

The Hired Training for Tomorrow team successfully implemented training classes through virtual and hybrid delivery with three participant cohorts. A total of 39 participants attended the trainings. The training elements were consistent with each class while the structure was adapted to meet the needs of each cohort. All participants in the Training for Tomorrow Program attained their NorthStar Digital Literacy Certification. Participants were supported by their employment counselor to develop their goals for employment, life skills, and education. Case manager worked one-on-one with each participant to address any barriers to their success: technology, hot spots, rent support, transportation, food support, and clothing support. Medtronic was a key partner since the onset of Training for Tomorrow program. Based on this success, Hired built relationships with additional community partners: Success Computer Consultants, Ebenezer, and Endeavor Airlines. These employers attended online sessions with Training for Tomorrow participants and offered interviews and then employment opportunities.

Participant “KL” - I am so freaking excited. My family struggled with instability and extreme poverty for 7 years, we’ve faced and overcome things most people couldn’t imagine. This is the final step to us escaping those circumstances and the first step towards creating new ones. I wanted you to know exactly how important this opportunity is to me and to thank you for your part in it. You literally saved my life. Two months ago, I was struggling with crippling depression and anxiety fighting thoughts of self-harm and was this close to giving up. After a year of struggling to survive here and all we went through in Phoenix I was just so dang tired. This program changed my life for the better. It gave me the leg up that I needed to keep going and the ability to provide for my family in a meaningful way. It’s an act of service that I will never forget. So, from me to you as a woman thank you truly for what you have done here.

#### Tree Trust

Participant, Minh, making progress on building the Lake Phalen deckOne highlight was in the growth and success of a Tree Trust project to rebuild a community deck at Lake Phalen in St. Paul. Having landscape construction projects such as decking at Lake Phalen maximized the program effectiveness and maintained participant satisfaction with the program, even in cold months where landscaping work was minimal. The photo is of Branches spring participant, Minh, making progress on the Lake Phalen deck. Participating in the spring cohort, Minh obtained certification in First Aid/CPR, as well as OSHA-10 Construction.

Mar’kel joined our Branches cohort just two months after sustaining serious burns on his hands due to a tragic house fire. Mar’kel started the cohort with limits on what he was able to do with his hands, but his resilience and determination to heal never wavered. Mar’kel is an outstanding worker. His Crew Leader reports that “Mar’kel has shown a high aptitude for leadership, team building and organizational skills. He continuously shows he can work hard and maintain punctuality—even when the environment and conditions are tough. He makes a difference in our crew and brings out the best in everyone.” Mar’kel is passionate about tree care skill development and working outside, and we look forward to connecting him with our employer partners for successful, long-term employment in the tree care industry.

Another success story comes from summer Branches participant, Nathan. In high school, Nathan participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program at Tree Trust. This experience called him back to Tree Trust after graduating high school, to further advance his interest and professional development for green careers. By the end of the summer Branches cohort, Nathan progressed towards earning three different industry recognized certifications: Tree Care Apprentice, OSHA-10 construction, and First Aid/CPR certification. Nathan achieved all three certifications and gained a wealth of field competency experience in tree care and property maintenance. This gave Nathan a competitive edge over other applicants for long term employment, securing him a full-time landscaping job at Organic Bob Lawn Care in the Minneapolis area. Nathan started the Branches program without a clear sense of his employment goals or long-term career plan. Through Branches, Nathan received extensive employment readiness training, and worked with his Tree Trust case manager and crew leader to explore his career options. We are grateful for Nathan’s presence in the program, and that Branches could help him prepare for a fulfilling career in the green industry.

#### African Immigrants Community Services

A highlight from the AICS program was connecting the youth in their community to provide them with the opportunity to gain skills around employment and education. Additionally, they were able to connect with training schools and employers to give the participants the opportunity to attend boot camps and internships that they might not have been able to do without the support of the program. Specifically noted was the importance of providing the one-on-one mentorship. Another major success of this program was the support services provided to help participants with housing, transportation, and other social services they needed, allowing more complete engagement with the program.

One success story is from a participant that completed the phlebotomy course and became certified. This student is bilingual with English being her second language. Although there were some language barriers, she was able to successfully complete the course and pass the exam on her first try. This student came into the office consistently for mentorship, case management, and career readiness such as resume building and interview prep and was able to find a job just a few weeks after completion of her course.

Another success story is of Sagal; she moved to the United States in 2019 and was interested in IT. She reached out to us after hearing about our program, but unfortunately didn’t qualify after she informed us that she didn’t have her driver’s license yet and only had her permit. Sagal continued to contact us and expressed the willingness to get her driver’s license. We connected her with a driving school so she could join the class. After her hard work and two failed attempts on her road tests, she was successfully able to get her driver's licenses and continued to complete her training program as well as her paid internship. Sagal then landed her first IT job as an IT tech support at Trinity Tech and she was really proud!

#### Somali Community Resettlement Services

One of the PCA companies that partnered with SCRS shared that they were now at full staff, something that they were struggling to be at for most of the pandemic. They were very grateful for the help of the program to fill all their positions.

The SCRS program provided career readiness training with Microsoft applications and fundamental IT skills. They saw lot of improvement in IT skills after their training. They shared that with Microsoft applications, participants did not need to be experts with it but having a base understanding helped open doors for them in their future of employment or education.

## Appendix A

#### Employer List for Participants that Entered Employment

Includes reported employers for participants that entered employment by March 31, 2022

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Employer** | **Number of Participants** |
| Medtronic | 12 |
| Nice Guys Corporation | 9 |
| BB Home Health | 5 |
| Target | 4 |
| Amazon | 3 |
| Allina Health | 2 |
| American Security | 2 |
| Best Choice Home Care | 2 |
| Boston Scientific | 2 |
| Endeavor Airlines | 2 |
| FedEx | 2 |
| Kalkaal Homecare | 2 |
| Knife River | 2 |
| Medical Assembly at CPC | 2 |
| Rainbow Treecare | 2 |
| Salama Child Care Center | 2 |
| Serenity Group Homes | 2 |
| Surad | 2 |
| Walmart | 2 |
| Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services | 1 |
| All Over Media Marketing | 1 |
| AT&T | 1 |
| Autism Bright Star | 1 |
| Best Buy | 1 |
| Bethesda | 1 |
| Birch Tree Care | 1 |
| Chipotle | 1 |
| City of St Paul | 1 |
| CVS | 1 |
| Genesys Works | 1 |
| Gopuff | 1 |
| Great Wolf Lodge | 1 |
| GS Labs | 1 |
| Hamline University | 1 |
| Hilton | 1 |
| IMI | 1 |
| Lumen | 1 |
| Mall of America | 1 |
| Mental Health Care Counseling | 1 |
| Metropolitan State University | 1 |
| North Side Day Service | 1 |
| Old Navy | 1 |
| Organic Bob | 1 |
| Rahma Home Care | 1 |
| Safeway Home Medica | 1 |
| ScribeAmerica | 1 |
| Skyline Math & Science Academy | 1 |
| Spantek | 1 |
| Star Home Health | 1 |
| Starbucks | 1 |
| Success Computer Consulting | 1 |
| Threebridge | 1 |
| Trinity Tech | 1 |
| UMN | 1 |
| UPS | 1 |
| Volt Workforce Solutions | 1 |
| Wells Fargo | 1 |
| Others: food service, call center, PCA, social services, transportation, and event planning | 12 |
| **Total** | **111** |