



SFY 2019-20 Construction Careers Foundation Direct Appropriation

Progress Report

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

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Introduction

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

Legislative Appropriation Reference

Funds for this project for State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2018 and 2019 were appropriated in [2017 Minnesota Session Laws, Ch. 94, S.F. 1456, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3\(d\)](#). Funds for SFY 2020 and 2021 were appropriated in [2019 Minnesota 1st Special Session Laws, Ch. 7, H.F. 2, Art. 1, Sec. 3, Subd. 3\(r\)](#).

Appropriation

The appropriation provided \$1,000,000 each year for SFY 2018 and 2019 and \$375,000 each year for SFY 2020 and 2021. The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is permitted to use five percent of the appropriation to administer the grant, making the amount available to CCF \$950,000 for SFY 2018 and 2019 and \$356,250 for SFY 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Objectives Presented in the Work Plan

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

1. Enhance and grow an industrywide marketing campaign targeted to youth and young adults focusing on the depth and breadth of careers within the construction industry;
2. Increase construction industry exposure activities for middle school and high school youth, parents, and counselors to reach a more diverse demographic and broader statewide audience;
3. Increase the number of high schools in Minnesota offering construction classes during the academic year that utilize a Multi-Craft curriculum, thereby exposing participants to a variety of construction trades;
4. Increase the number of summer internship opportunities; and
5. Enhance activities to support graduating seniors/young adults in their efforts to obtain employment in the construction industry and increase the number of young adults employed in the construction industry that reflect Minnesota’s diverse workforce.

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

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

Program Activities

Described below is a summary of activities delivered during the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Additional detail is contained in a report about the CCP Initiative and posted on DEED's [Youth Direct Appropriations](#) webpage.

Objective 1: Outreach and Marketing Efforts

In partnership with Pocket Hercules and industry stakeholders, emphasis during the past year has been on expanding content on the [Construction Careers website](#) and making it easier for prospective candidates and their supporters to learn more about the construction industry through social media channels. Website upgrades included:

- Addition of more than 20 real stories from Minnesota construction workers sharing how they got their start and why they chose a construction career, and more than 12 new student profiles from middle and high school students describing their experiences with the Learn2Build and MN Trades Academy Programs;
- Addition of a teacher resources page with information to download for classroom use; and
- Upgraded career pages with more information about construction apprenticeships.

Social media efforts included increased frequency and quantity of content pushed through social media platforms with nearly daily content posts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

CCP has launched a mobile app to reach more young people through their phones. Promotion of the app ramped up with the start of school in September 2020.

CCP has created an email list of approximately 850 educators throughout Minnesota to deliver monthly e-newsletters about CCP activities. The newsletters will complement and promote the new educator materials available through the website.

Print communications also continue with news releases and continued outreach to Minnesota media outlets such as the StarTribune, Finance & Commerce, Construction Dive, and Teaching Today Minnesota.

Objective 2: Middle School and High School Events

To increase construction industry exposure activities for middle school and high school youth, CCP partners conducted fourteen (14) hands-on events throughout the state (13 in-person and one at-home event).

Highlights of these events are:

- 3,621 students attended CCP-sponsored events
- All students received their own personal protective equipment to keep (hard hats, safety glasses, assorted tools in a tool bag, etc.)
- Typically as many as 18 different trades were represented at the high school career exploration events, all with live activities that gave students a real hands-on experience working with tradesmen and women

Middle School Events – Learn2Build

Learn2Build (L2B) exposes middle school students to career possibilities in Minnesota’s construction trades. By offering hands-on events with schools and youth-focused community-based organizations, L2B brings construction trades to the classroom through fun, take home project experiences. This program introduces the concept of a career in construction as students begin to think about their high school and post-secondary options. Nine middle school events were scheduled this year, an increase of one over the prior year. Due to the pandemic, three events were cancelled and one was shifted to an at-home project opportunity.

High School Events – Construct Tomorrow

The Construct Tomorrow (CT) program provides students with information about apprenticeship career training and opportunities in the construction industry. This program brings representatives from multiple trades to a site designated by the host and provides hands-on experiences for the students, who get to work with apprentices and journey-level workers to wire circuits, trowel cement, set tile and more. With support from the CCP Initiative, CT hosted 8 hands-on educational opportunities in 2019-20 (two additional events were cancelled due to the pandemic).

Objective 3: Academic Year Curriculum

The CCP Initiative works with various schools and school districts that offer students a Construction Career Pathway during the academic year, referred to as Construction Apprenticeship Preparation programs (CAP). Such coursework incorporates the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3), a nationally recognized, comprehensive apprenticeship readiness training curriculum.

Schools participating in 2019-20 include: Bloomington (College and Career Academy), Eagan (High School), Minneapolis (Roosevelt High School), St. Paul, (Central and Humboldt High Schools), and White Bear Lake (ALC and North campuses).

Objective 4: Summer Internship

The Minnesota Trades Academy (MTA) is a paid summer construction internship experience provided in partnership with the Apprenticeship Coordinators Association of MN (ACAM), MN Building Trades Councils and city youth internship programs. The goal is to help selected high school youth prepare for adulthood through lifelong learning, skill development, and access to good jobs with good benefits in the construction industry. MTA offers an **Introductory Track (Track I)** and an **Advanced Track (Track II)**. In Track I, interns receive an overarching 8-week introduction to construction career opportunities within the building trades industry (carpentry, pipefitting and electrical). Interns are also exposed to industry-related careers such as architecture, surveying, estimating, project management, and design build. Track II provides a 9-week opportunity preparing interns to select a construction career path through union apprenticeship training, construction-related post-secondary tracks, or direct entry into the construction workplace. Throughout the internship program, students visit 16 different apprenticeship training centers where they receive training and supervision from industry experts as they complete projects using both hand and power tools.

Data Elements Being Collected and Reported

CCF is required to submit data to DEED to document the demographics of participants served, services provided and outcomes achieved. The information collected is shown below.

Adaptations Due to COVID-19

Programs delivered through the CCP initiative are intentionally designed to be hands-on and provide students with opportunities to experience various careers in the construction trades. As the pandemic disrupted the usual service delivery model, CCP partners formed an advisory group to brainstorm and evaluate different approaches that could continue to have impact on the students in this new environment. Increased emphasis on digital outreach through the website, social media and new mobile phone app continue to get the word out about the opportunities available through the construction trades. Virtual “at home” events and hands-on projects provide students the chance to see if a career in the trades feels like a good fit. The transition to a virtual program environment made the CCP programs more accessible to many youth, removing transportation barriers and allowing for greater parent/family participation. Interaction with participants increased and improved program quality and reach to targeted populations.

Grant Outcomes

Described below are highlights for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. More detailed information is included in a report submitted by CCF that is posted to DEED’s [Youth Direct Appropriations](#) webpage.

Outreach and Marketing Efforts

- Website Outreach – the website attracted more than 15,000 unique visitors who conducted more than 21,000 website sessions. The “bounce rate” of people who landed on the site but did no further

interaction was only 18.95% (average is typically greater than 70%). Twenty percent of website visitors were new, and 85% were from the metro area with the remainder from Greater Minnesota (big increase in visitors from Duluth). Sixteen percent of visitors were age 18-24, nearly 3% more than the previous year, and 31% were aged 25-34. Fifty-two percent of visitors were male and 48% were female.

- Social Media Outreach – more than 24,000 individuals reached through social media outreach, including at least 1,700 middle school students and 1,700 high school students. CCP created 345 tweets, 219 Instagram posts, more than 385 Facebook posts, 318 LinkedIn posts during the past year.

Middle School Activities

- Five in-person highly interactive Learn2Build events reached more than 450 students prior to the start of the pandemic.
- Additional middle school students signed up and received a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) project kit to complete at home with online guidance due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Students reported 89-90% satisfaction with the in-person events, and 50% reported they would be interested in learning more about construction; 15-30% reported they could see themselves working with their hands and using tools to build things as a career.

High School Activities

- More than 3,170 students attended an in-person Construct Tomorrow event (84% of participants were from Greater Minnesota).
- 502 students participated in the various Construction Apprenticeship Preparation courses offered at the 8 participating schools.
- 56% of those in the CAP programs were students of color or indigenous, with black and Hispanic students comprising nearly 40% of students in these classes.
- 15.2% of students in the CAP courses were young women.

Summer Internships

- Recruitment for the summer internship program started during the school year, where 609 students from 36 high schools attended events at their schools to learn about the program and ask questions.
- In 2020, 616 applicants from 46 schools applied to the program, 175 students were interviewed and 63 enrolled.
- 13% of 2020 summer interns were female.
- 56% of 2020 enrollees reported a racial/ethnic identity other than white.

- Of those who completed the 2019 MTA Summer Internship Program, 6 participants were eligible for placement in employment and 4 interns were successfully placed in construction-related jobs – 2 placed as Laborers, 1 placed as an Interior Finisher, and 1 placed as a Carpenter. Information about 2020 placements will be available in the future.

More detailed information about the progress of the initiative through the various program components is included in the Construction Careers Pathway Initiative Report, dated September 2020, that is found on DEED’s [Youth Direct Appropriations](#) webpage.

Expenditures

The activities described in this report for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 were funded by appropriations for both SFY 2019 and SFY 2020. The contract for SFY 2019 funds ran from June 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Final expenditures for the SFY 2019 were as follows:

Budget Category	SFY 2019 Budget	SFY 2019 Expenditures	Percent of SFY 2019 Budget Expended
Administration	\$7,755.00	\$7,755.00	100%
Contracted Services	\$650,145.00	\$635,292.87	98%
Direct Services	\$292,100.00	\$306,952.13	105%
Total	\$950,000.00	\$950,000.00	100%

The variation from the approved budget in the final expenditures was approved by the DEED grant manager.

The contract for SFY 2020 runs from May 1, 2020 through June 31, 2021. Expenditures through September 30, 2020 were as follows:

Budget Category	SFY 2020 Budget	SFY 2020 Expenditures	Percent of SFY 2020 Budget Expended
Administration	\$24,570.00	\$6,142.50	25%
Contracted Services	\$134,260.00	\$113,919.01	85%
Direct Services	\$197,420.00	\$81,007.73	41%
Total	\$356,250.00	\$201,069.24	56%

The contract for SFY 21 funds began July 1, 2020 and ends July 31, 2021. No funds have yet been expended from the SFY 21 grant.