

2009 Minnesota Youth Program Annual Report



*Minnesota Department of Employment and
Economic Development*

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On the Cover: Christina spent a second summer working at Park Center High School in suburban Hennepin County as an office assistant. (Photo courtesy of Hennepin County.)

2009 Minnesota Youth Program Annual Report

Minnesota supports partnerships that help young people - the future workforce - attain the skills, knowledge, and aptitudes to become productive workers. As a result of the WIA Youth Recovery Act, Minnesota was able to provide summer jobs for an additional 6,000 youth in 2009. Thanks to the Minnesota Legislature's investment in the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), the infrastructure was already in place to implement a large-scale summer jobs program in Minnesota.

Minnesota's youth workforce system reconnects youth with quality educational and employment opportunities. Youth service providers prioritize services to those who are most in need and develop a mix of services based on an assessment of each youth. Different populations of youth have different needs. Language and cultural issues are a factor in designing and providing quality services. Local Youth Councils provide leadership by serving as a catalyst to connect youth with quality secondary and postsecondary educational opportunities and prepare youth to participate in a new, knowledge-based economy.

The Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) has significant impact in preparing youth for the workforce with relevant skills and knowledge for the future. MYP provides youth with hands-on opportunities to apply skills they learn in the classroom:

1. Inquiry: Fostering a curiosity and desire in young people to explore new areas and develop new skills.
2. Technology: Exploring and becoming familiar with current technologies.
3. Science, Engineering, and Math Skills: Practicing vital skills to enhance mastery.
4. Decision Making and Daily Living: Learning important time management skills and practicing decision-making.
5. Interaction with Others: Working with diverse groups of people and teaching them how to work together to reach goals.
6. Positive Attitudes and Behaviors: Teaching young people about the importance of attitude in the workforce, about being on time, and having the confidence to solve problems they encounter.

The successful implementation of the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) relies on the availability of coordinated services for economically disadvantaged and at-risk youth. The Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) and Youth Councils help to ensure collaboration across agencies responsible for workforce development, education, social services, community corrections, health, Rehabilitation Services, State Services for the Blind, Job Corps, and the business community. Collaborative efforts lead to shared outcomes for all youth-serving partners.

This report includes a separate profile for each of Minnesota's 16 Workforce Service Areas (WSAs) highlighting the services and activities provided to youth under the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). Customers are low-income and at-risk youth who lack academic and "applied" skills considered critical for current and future workplace needs. Cost-effective youth services reduce future costs of out-of-home placement, public assistance and the juvenile justice system and

- Exposure to work/careers in high school improves employment prospects and short, medium and long-term earnings
- Contextual/hands-on learning improves student's grades, attendance and graduation rates
- Work experience and work-related education have clear employment and income benefits for low-income youth/families
- Teens in low-income families have the least access to jobs, especially jobs that combine part-time work and school

Detailed charts at the end of this report provide customer information and outcome data for the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP).

Program Summary

Career information, education and training programs are available to all youth served through the Northwest Private Industry Council (PIC). Inter-County Community Council serves in-school youth, and the Department of Employment and Economic Development serves out-of-school youth. Through assessment, each participant's employability, aptitudes, abilities, and interests are determined and an individual service strategy is developed to achieve the participant's employment goals. All activities and services offered are competency-based and goal-oriented.

The programs assist youth in defining who they are, where they are today and how to achieve their individual goals.

Impact of ARRA Funds

ARRA funds are not only working to vitalize the economy, but allowing a substantial group of youth the ability to enter the workforce. With this additional funding, Northwest PIC doubled the number of youth who participated in the summer employment program, at a time when the youth unemployment rate was at its highest level in nearly 65 years. ARRA funding increased services to several underserved populations, including youth in long-term foster care, teen parents, at-risk youth and youth who are basic skills deficient.

Work Experience

Youth are matched to work experience sites based on their individual skill levels, their occupational interests, their location and available transportation. Staff works with the youth and worksite supervisors to orient them to the program goals and review required elements such as safety, emergency procedures and payroll policies. Evaluations are completed at the end of employment by worksite supervisors and youth, and program staff tracks work readiness skills attained by the youth.

Over 170 youth began their career path this summer. Our focus is to provide high quality work experience for all youth. The right supervisor can ignite the youth's self confidence and self worth.

Career Exploration

Youth received information on the industries and occupations identified as in-demand by the local Workforce Investment Board. They utilized information in the Northwest MnCareers Supplement in identifying a career plan and met with Labor Market Information experts who provided a practical application for the information in the supplement.

The Outreach-to-Schools program was offered to area high schools, Adult Learning Centers, the Red River Valley Juvenile Center, Community Action Agencies, and Pine to Prairie Technical Preparation Consortium.

Northwest Private Industry Council, Inc.

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Area Served

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

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	74
Youth with a Disability	81%
Youth on Public Assistance	22%
Juvenile Offenders	12%

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

The goals for collaboration with other shared youth vision partners include:

- Establish a workforce development system that is market driven, customer responsive, performance based, and aligned with the skilled labor needs of Northwest Minnesota.
- Prepare transitional workers for employment that leads to job retention, wage progression and self-sufficiency.
- Assist business and industry in upgrading the skills for the future workforce.
- Improve labor market exchange and labor market information for all businesses and individuals.
- Maximize effective coordination and utilization of public and private dollars, leveraging resources and identifying additional and alternative sources of support.
- Promote workforce development programs' increased awareness of ongoing initiatives, and providing information on workforce issues to the private sector and the general public.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

The involvement of private sector employers in the programs not only addresses the needs of local businesses, but also provides a seamless transition from work experience to full-time gainful employment. The financial literacy component of the summer youth program benefitted both the youth and future employers. Youth received a curriculum that helps them learn the basics of handling their money and finances, including how to create positive relationships with financial institutions. Equipping young people in their formative years with the basics of financial education can give them the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to manage their finances once they enter the adult world.

Other Funds Leveraged

Due to its success in assisting at-risk youth engaged in educational activities, 70% of youth enrolled in the Minnesota Youth Program received academic credit for work experience. All schools in the seven-county service area refer the most at-risk youth to the employment and training programs.

One teen parent worked at a local café this summer learning how to cook from scratch. She was also involved with planning menus, serving customers and realized how organized you need to be to handle the flow of business. With funds made available through the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), daycare was provided to enable this youth to learn new life and employment skills. In addition, assistance was available for vehicle maintenance and clothing.

Lacie

My success in the field of education would not be complete without the help of the WIA program. While I was attending



Bemidji State University studying music, education was my main priority thanks to all the funding I received from this wonderful program. Funding is always a concern for college students, but I was able to work limited hours which helped me keep my grades up and my head in the game.

Now, I'm an Instrumental Music Teacher working in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota. I teach 5th grade band, 6th grade band, Junior High Band, Senior High Band, Drum Line and Kindergarten classroom music – how much better could it get?! Thanks to this program, I have landed my dream job! Thank You!

April

April was enrolled into the In-School Youth Program and was considering attending a local Community and Technical College after graduation. She was referred to the Out-of School Youth Program for assistance.

April heard about the WIA Program through a presentation at her school and was instantly interested in how the program might make it possible for her to go to school. April graduated high school and enrolled at a local Community and Technical College and began studies in Phlebotomy. She has since completed her program and is currently employed by an area healthcare facility as a phlebotomist earning an hourly wage of over \$10.00/hr.

"It allowed me to go to school and get a job doing something I really enjoy. I probably wouldn't have went to college had it not been for this program. It helped to keep me motivated to carry through with my schooling. I think the program is great!"

Community Comments

T-shirts worn by youth participants stated: "People Helping People." A truck driver lost a load of split wood on the highway. One of the youth crews came upon the scene, stopped and asked if they could help. Six youth jumped out of the vehicle and started to pick up the wood. While loading up the wood, the gentleman noticed the t-shirts and said, "Wow, you really are people helping people!"

"They did a tremendous job, painting five or six buildings and getting the grounds in shape".

"It's the most fantastic program. I love it because it does such a great service for the community".

"They cleaned the Plexiglas around the girls skating rink, and that is not an easy job. They did really nice work".



One of Justin Sinjem's goals during his work experience in Crookston was to earn enough money to buy a new bicycle, in addition to saving a portion of his earnings.

Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program, Inc.

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Area Served

Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Todd, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin Counties

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	239
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	59%
Youth With a Disability.....	54%
High School Dropouts.....	23%

Program Summary

Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc. (RMCEP) set a goal for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Programming to establish a comprehensive development system that will assist youth to achieve economic self-sufficiency and empower them to act as solid contributors to community growth. The system provides effective learning environments linking education and employment; leadership development; nurturing mentors; and sustained support. Key priorities set for the 2009 program year were emphasis on career planning, soft skills development and secondary school completion. These same goals were applied to all youth served by RMCEP through any funding source. RMCEP staff implemented these priorities by combining a variety of activities, such as work experiences, the career planning process, job seeking/keeping skills and an educational component for those who had not yet finished their high school diploma/GED.

Impact of ARRA Funding

Through the addition of federal ARRA funding for youth programs and the extension of the age range to 24, many opportunities were possible for older youth that have not been available in the past. Staff was able to develop work experiences that related to the participant's post-secondary schooling or employment path. As a result of the age increase, RMCEP was able to serve more out-of-school youth who were not engaged in any schooling and encourage them to work towards their GED and post-secondary training.

Many new worksites came on board, as well as renewed interest from worksites that had not participated for several years. This expansion allowed for a wider variety of work experiences offered to participants and the development of specific career interest opportunities. Emphasis was placed on all youth participants earning a work readiness credential.

A number of adults who might not have worked this past summer were hired for the purpose of supervising youth in community crews because of the ARRA funding. This helped to assure quality work experiences for youth participants.

RMCEP served 1,122 youth with these additional ARRA funds this summer. The ages of youth served were as follows: age 14-15 – 316, age 16-18 – 465, age 19-21 – 241 and age 22-24 – 100 participants. The ARRA funding served 468 participants who had either dropped out of school or graduated but had no post secondary training.

Work Experience

Summer work experience opportunities increased by the development of more than 250 new worksites, 137 of which were in the private sector, and 19 crews. These worksites were in addition to worksites that regularly participate in the program.

Each WorkForce Center operates a year round youth program that includes work training during the school year. Participants worked an average of 10 hours per week. This allowed time to complete

homework assignments, an opportunity for activity participation through school or community, and friends and family time. Job shadowing was encouraged and sites were developed as potential career interests were discovered. Youth ages 14-15 generally worked at public sites on an after-school basis while older youth, ages 16-18, preferred work experiences in a chosen career path. Many times this led to further training such as CNA training and certification. As youth were ready, they sought unsubsidized employment with the assistance of the local Youth Services Coordinator.

Through a new focus on Green Jobs, many participants were able to have “hands on” experiences in Minnesota’s green economy. One of the work crews visited Minnkota Recycling and Lowes to learn about green techniques and products. A local state University gave a tour of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Architecture and green building practices. The youth in this project are more aware of their decisions in what they buy, what they eat, and what they throw away.

This past summer, 19 crews were formed in communities to take on a variety of work activities. The crew in Crow Wing State Park incorporated green-related components into their work. They cleared

branches and brush from land that was unused to return it to its original prairie-ground status. These branches and brush were then chipped down and shipped to an ethanol plant in Little Falls. Participation in this project helped each crew member realize that they could make a big difference.

Career
Exploration
Youth Services
Coordinators
presented career
exploration
materials and

information to youth. Outreach to Schools project interns worked with area schools to assist school staff with career planning for high-school-aged youth. Each intern provided: interest assessments, access to career information sites such as ISEEK and MCIS, Minnesota Careers books and regional supplements that include local labor

Dylan is a Bemidji High School Senior, pursuing his dream of becoming a fire fighter. This has been his dream since 10th grade. Fire fighter Justin Sherwood got him interested in this field and has been a mentor to Dylan.

While on the School-to-Work Program through the high school, RMCEP is funding him to work two hours a day at the fire hall. He also gets school credit while working.

After high school, he plans to attend Moorhead Technical College for fire fighting.

Dylan says that some of the best parts of the job are learning about the duties of Emergency Medical Technicians, properly taking care of equipment, and helping people. He enjoys his place of employment and admires how well the staff works with each other.



market information on jobs in demand/high pay industries, information on 'green' careers/jobs, WorkForce Center resource information/orientations, college/post secondary education training options and information on services available through other youth programs. This information was targeted to youth and parents to promote awareness of career options to help them make informed post secondary decisions.

The Department of Agriculture-Research Service provided work with different research scientists to understand how crops interact with the environment. The Minnesota State University-Moorhead Cancer Research Lab at DragonTech worked with youth to research strains of cancer cells and the positive and negative affects of treatments on cancer cells. Other opportunities took place in engineering, art history, pharmacy, youth development, teaching, biology, healthcare, and small engines.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

Local partners include: Youthbuild/Minnesota Juvenile Center, Independent Lifestyles, Inc., local colleges for CNA education and training, county social workers for the referral of foster youth, Paul Bunyan Transition Plus, Vocational Rehabilitation and AEC/PORT Group Homes.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector

Involvement

RMCEP used some of the WIA Incentive Funds to help bring curriculum to school districts as part of the Dream It, Do It Campaign. The manufacturing sector in Region 4 has high-demand employment needs and requested assistance with getting career and labor market information out to the local schools. Two RMCEP staff participated on committees to assist in promoting careers in the manufacturing pathway.

Other Funds Leveraged

A local County Park received a \$300 donation from a group that stays at the park every July 4th. That local park had a crew of youth work on building new bonfire pits this summer. They lowered the 'rings' into the ground, put rocks and cement around the pits and put the group's name in them in recognition of the donation. The park now has safe fire pit rings and the county has received many compliments. The group that made the donation was so happy with what the park did that they donated another \$500 to the park again this year.

Program Summary

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training's (NEMOJT) Summer Youth Employment Program offers disadvantaged youth an opportunity to gain work experience in their communities. Career counselors at local WorkForce Centers place the youth at worksites that fit their interests and abilities. Youth prepare for the future by learning steady work ethics and expectations. The program provides career advancement opportunities, including on-the-job training, career exploration, aptitude testing, a variety of workshops, and the possibility of year-round employment.

Impact of ARRA Funds

Under ARRA, youth employment services were expanded in northeast Minnesota. For many young people, getting started in the working world is a difficult task. Some need help learning the basic skills required in all jobs – responsibility, thoroughness, accuracy and having a strong work ethic. Youth employment services offer these skills in an environment which provides the youth help in achieving these attributes.

Youth weren't the only ones benefitting from employment services. Communities, organizations, school districts and many other public and non-profit worksites received crucial help from area young people. For many local schools, towns and organizations, the work done by summer youth participants is an important part of their yearly duties.

Work Experience

This summer, ARRA youth funds meant an increase in the number of summer youth participants. Jodi worked at the International Falls Chamber of Commerce doing clerical work and helping plan the

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training

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Area Served

Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca,
Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis
Counties (excluding the City of Duluth)

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	174
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	56%
Youth With a Disability	41%
Youth on Public Assistance	18%



Ryan helped build this wolf den at the International Wolf Center in Ely as a part of his summer work experience with the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training.

Angel

Angel, age 19, works as a clerical assistant at the YWCA's Young Mothers Program, but she does much more than answer phones. Angel organizes fundraisers for the program and exercise groups for the young women involved with the program. "She just has a way about her that motivates the girls better than the counselors can," Supervisor Melissa said.

Angel cares about the Young Mothers program because she once was part of it. Though she now lives on her own, coworkers are glad that Angel and her children are still involved with the program through her job. "Angel is a strong independent woman," Melissa said. "We like to show her off."

Angel says her job taught her organization, self motivation, and office skills. In the fall, she will attend Lake Superior College in Duluth. The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training and YWCA's Young Mothers program plan to guide her in her transition to college.



community-wide Smokey Bear celebration. Supervisor Betsy took on a mentor role. "I think constructive criticism will give her a positive direction," she said. Chamber staff received many compliments regarding Jodi and her friendly demeanor. Hibbing's Greyhound Bus Museum director, Gene, also considers himself a mentor to his youth workers. He believes it is important that the workers learn a trade and subsequently has this year's workers doing light mechanical and carpentry work. Since he began working with the program, he has helped many of his workers attain a GED.

Career Exploration

Though the unemployment rate is ever increasing in Northern Minnesota, medical careers continue to grow. Sandra, in the process of completing her nursing degree, had a chance to learn about medical careers in the area by working at St. Raphael's Health and Rehabilitation Center in Eveleth. Coworkers say Sandra is better than many of their regular employees, and many staff members have given Sandra tours of the facilities so she could learn about the various jobs in the healthcare industry.

Each summer, Career Counselors plan career exploration workshops for youth participants. This summer, a majority of workshops focused on careers that are growing in the area and counselors took youth groups on tours to learn about these high-growth careers. Tours included: hospitals, mines, State Parks, and ships.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

Many participants were referred to the Office of Job Training by other state programs such as MFIP and Social Services. Nicole of Aitkin was hired when funding for the other program she was on ran out. Nicole works as an office assistant at the Aitkin WorkForce Center. She has enjoyed her time there and says she wishes she had known about the Summer Youth program when she was younger. "I absolutely would not be as happy as I am now if I hadn't found out about the Summer Youth program," she said.

An interesting collaboration took place this year between the NEMOJT and Squaw Lake's Eagleview Community Foundation. The foundation decided they wanted to get teens more involved in their community, and funded the opening of a teen-run store. Participants Shelby, Michael, and Margaret took part in every step of opening a new business – writing leases, presenting business plans, stocking their store, and general store operations. Worksite supervisor and Squaw Lake Mayor Toni Wilcox says, "I wanted the teens to do something the community could step back and say 'wow' about."

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

Small businesses benefit greatly from working with NEMOJT. Newly opened businesses, in particular, see many advantages to working with the program. In International Falls, Rick DeBenedet recently bought and reopened the Voyageur's Café at Lepper's Italian Deli. With the help of local Career Counselors Carol and Sue, Rick

found summer workers Matt and Josie. Both youth workers greatly increased their work readiness skills and both enjoyed working at the deli. The deli has grown significantly in popularity since it first opened. "The summer program allowed me to keep my costs down while my business grew," Rick said.

Conclusion

Young people in northeastern Minnesota learned many skills and gained valuable experience this summer. Youth services offered young people an opportunity to get started in the working world by giving them real work experience. Local youth worked at schools, day care centers, museums, libraries, forestry outposts and parks. They learned basic work skills – like promptness, responsibility and seeing tasks through to the end – in addition to more specific skills, such as how to operate a wide variety of technical equipment, how to care for children and how to manage a modern office. No matter what specific skills they gained, young people left their jobs ready to take on their next challenge in the modern workforce using the skills and references gained in their summer experience. These skills and experiences will help them as they set out on their career or educational paths. Without these programs, many youth could fall behind and small communities and non-profit organizations would lose a valuable resource.



Brady

Hello, my name is Brady and I am 18 years old. I graduated this past year from Floodwood High School. I've been working in the Floodwood school office since 8th grade.

When applying for jobs, you know as well as I, that you really need to have a good quality application – they look at all the other jobs that you have had. When I list my secretarial job through the Minnesota WorkForce Center, the businesses always ask what I did through the program, and it is always a good response.

I've definitely gained a lot of confidence in myself and set my limits really high in life. This past July, there was actually an opening for a secretarial position at the school that I could have applied for, but because of college, I did not apply. The fact that I knew I could have applied just made me realize what I may want to go to school for, since I already have 6 years of experience under my belt! It's going to be sad leaving "the office" at the end of the summer, but who knows, maybe I will be back one day in the future!



Abigail spent a part of her summer working as an office assistant at the Aitkin WorkForce Center, helping customers and staff alike.

City of Duluth Workforce Development

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Area Served

City of Duluth

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	136
Youth on Public Assistance	79%
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	58%
Youth With a Disability.....	48%

Program Summary

Youth Program services are provided to in-school and out-of-school youth through the Duluth WorkForce Center, and an office in the Central Hillside Community Center. Participating youth receive case management, opportunities for work experience, assistance with job search, vocational testing, and career guidance. A licensed teacher is available in an on-site classroom to provide study skills, basic skills training and GED preparation. Individual guidance and funding are available to youth continuing on to college or vocational programs.

Impact of ARRA Funds

The American Recovery Act of 2009 allowed YES (Youth Employment Service) Duluth to put 236 youth to work in the summer youth work program, up 300% from the summer of 2008. Work sites throughout the city included public non-profit, private, as well as city and state government work sites. Work experiences were as varied as a sales clerk at Petco, an auto body assistant at Arrowhead Auto Body, a set design helper at the Duluth Playhouse, and a skate board repairer at Damage Board Shop. ARRA funds allowed Duluth youth to work 45,500 hours over the summer and earn almost \$365,000, which went into our local economy.

Work Experience

An in-depth safety orientation was provided for all participants at the beginning of the summer, including a pre- and post-test to document the increase in safety awareness. This paid off with a decrease in the number of injuries on the work sites.

YES Duluth developed 70 diverse work sites this summer. Twelve sites led to regular unsubsidized employment. Many of the sites were specifically chosen and tailored to the interests of the individual youth. Examples include a number of local automobile repair shops, community agencies working with disadvantaged youth, and a coffee shop.

Three work sites in particular highlight the good work performed in Duluth by the summer youth this year. Twelve youth worked for the Community Action Programs' Green Team, canvassing households throughout the city to raise energy awareness and made recommendations for increased energy efficiency. The mayor attended the kick-off event for the Green Team and the project was publicized by the media. Almost 120 youth worked for the City of Duluth, including 11 individuals that worked for the city and state street maintenance departments filling potholes and improving the streets, and 53 youth who worked for the city parks and maintenance department painting, gardening, and cleaning.

Unique work sites this summer included the Seeds of Hope Ranch, Howard's Fish House, the City of Duluth Engineering Department, North Shore Scenic Railroad, Organic Lawn Care, and Community Action Duluth.

Career Exploration

All youth in the program are offered the opportunity to complete a career evaluation with a licensed vocational evaluator to determine how their work interests, abilities, and values match up with careers. Every youth participant is introduced to career exploration websites such as iseek.org, thenorthlandworks.org, and Minnesotaworks.net where one can access information about the area's hot jobs, information about local employers, career development resources and job search techniques.

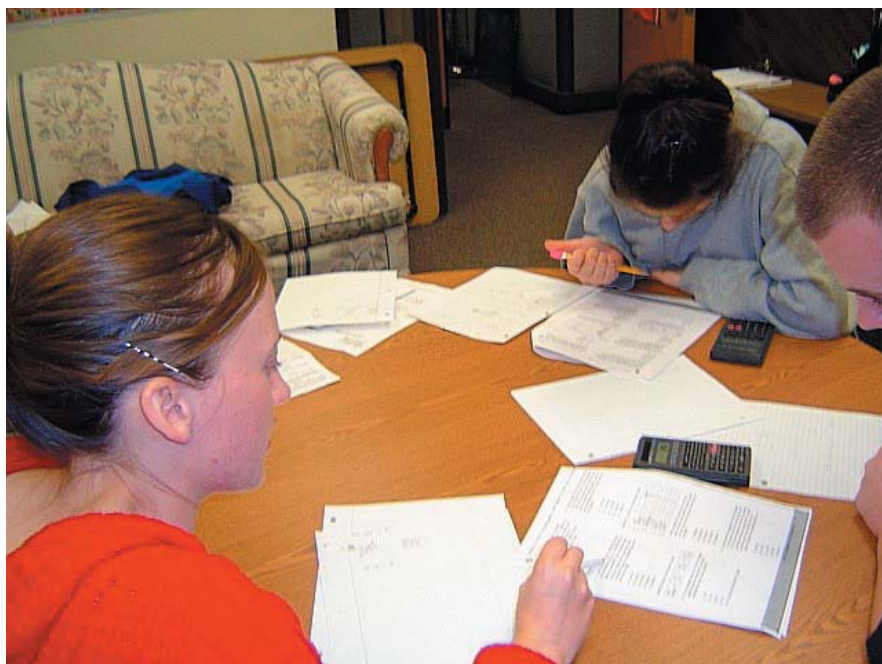
Job search seminars are also offered to all participants. Subjects include application and resume preparation, interviewing skills, dressing for success, as well as employer expectations and what to expect as a new employee.

GED/Basic Skills Tutoring

At the Duluth WorkForce Center, a licensed teacher tutors participants who are working on their GEDs or deficient in basic skills. Over the past year, the teacher has served 107 youth, and 46 participants have completed or partially completed their GEDs. In addition, 5 youth have participated in enrichment activities including ACT test preparation, college study skills and Accuplacer preparation.

Collaboration With Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

YES Duluth worked closely with the Public School District 709 Work Experience Coordinator to place twelve individuals with special needs into summer jobs. The coordinator provided intensive supports to the individuals on the work sites and stated that the work experiences taught his students skills that are not available in the classroom but only available by working on real jobs with real world of work expectations. Two of the individuals were hired on where they were placed after their summer work ended.



Tyler's Story

It is hard to believe the life Tyler led before he joined YES Duluth. He had a lot to learn about the world of school and work. Like many of the other at-risk youth enrolled in YES Duluth, he had been exposed to the harder side of life. Between the ages of 12 to 18 he was frequently incarcerated. Tyler made some choices he now wishes he had not made. Counselors at the time did their best to help him but he disregarded a lot of their advice because he felt that they had never been in the "same boat" as him. The consequences of his actions and his experience with the judicial system at the time seemed harsh, but he has learned through these experiences and is devoting his life to helping others growing through similar circumstances.



With the help of YES Duluth, he has completed his GED and is currently enrolled in his second year at Lake Superior College, where he is completing his general requirements with a goal of becoming a youth counselor at a local detention center.

This summer Tyler's knowledge and first hand experience proved invaluable to the expanded Summer Work Experience activities. His ability to interact and intervene kept the activities running violence-free. Tyler is continuing to help young people after school with an internship at Valley Youth, where he is a role model for all the young people that use the center.

YES Duluth teacher Elizabeth Mathias (left) works with two YES Duluth participants to help them prepare for taking their GED tests.

YES Duluth also partnered with Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Choice, unlimited, a community based non-profit agency that provides services to people with disabilities who are experiencing barriers to employment. They provided intensive on-site support to four youth, two of whom continue to work competitively at the same company where they were placed for their summer work experience.

Summer youth participants were all offered Financial Literacy classes, conducted by Community Action Duluth. These classes covered important topics such as budgeting, understanding credit cards, getting a mortgage, improving your credit score, and dealing with bill collectors.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

This year YES Duluth put forth special effort in finding private employers in the community that were open and willing to hire youth for the summer. Twenty-three employers were recruited to provide work experience sites for over 30 individuals. Most of the sites were developed with an individual in mind and some of the summer placements led to permanent positions.

Several young people had professional “internships” with businesses and government agencies, allowing them opportunities to experience occupations such as Physical Therapist and Accountant.

Other Funds Leveraged

YES Duluth leveraged resources through Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Choice, unlimited, and the Work Experience program of Public School District 709 to provide intensive on-site supports for youth with disabilities participating in the summer program.

Additionally, District 709 provided lunches at the work site to summer youth program participants through the school nutrition program.

Community Action Duluth provided staff to supervise and transport the youth on the Green Team. The staff also developed training seminars and other activities for the summer youth.

Program Summary

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS) connects economically disadvantaged, at-risk youth to employment and training programs that focus on helping them become productive and self-sufficient citizens. Youth programs provide one-on-one case management services and group activities for youth in the eleven-county service area. Strategies include partnering with high school teachers and counselors, assessing and evaluating youth at worksites, developing individualized service plans, and helping young people make the connection between personal success and community investment.

Impact of ARRA Funds

The ARRA-funded summer program positively impacted youth and communities in the service area. A total of 758 youth were enrolled and successfully completed a work experience.

One crew of seven young adults, age 22-24, was formed entirely from referrals from local probation officers. Participants expressed how thankful they were for a summer job. Their criminal records, combined with the slow economy, made it especially difficult for them to find part-time or full-time jobs.

A report from a school worksite stated: "Every student worker showed growth in their work readiness skills. They developed an understanding of the skills, abilities, and interests that they brought to the worksite. The classroom and journaling exercises gave the students an opportunity to learn more about the expectations of employers and employees and how to put into practice the language of the world of work: initiative, responsibility, staying on-task, inductive/deductive reasoning, problem-solving, communications, trust, loyalty, perspective, work attitude, creative thinking, listening, speaking, decision-making, organization, proactive/reactive thinking, and decision making."

Work Experience

Participants engaged in a wide variety of work experience activities that helped at-risk youth develop employability skills, job skills, and positive self-esteem.

Before youth are placed in work experience activities, they complete a career assessment, and an Employment Specialist matches the youth's career interests and abilities to appropriate work experiences.

A summer of 2009 work experience success: CMJTS had a youth enrolled who graduated from high school in the spring and did not know what career he wanted to pursue. Ryan and seven other youth were placed in a summer work experience at the Delano Public Works Department. Ryan typically worked 27 hours a week, and sometimes more. The director of Public Works, Ernie Eden, stated "Ryan has excelled over the summer. He has been the best youth worker that we ever had and I believe that he has a future in this business." Because of this work experience, Ryan decided to attend a two year college

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services

Contact Information

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Area Served

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Kandiyohi,
McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Pine,
Renville, Sherburne, and Wright
Counties

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	236
Basic Skills Deficient Youth	87%
Youth With a Disability	67%
Juvenile Offender	32%

Kirsten's Story
Isanti County – WIA Youth Program



"My name is Kirsten and I am a single mom of a two-year-old daughter. When my daughter was born, I had no job, no money and her father was already out of the picture. For the first eighteen months, I worked jobs making minimum wage that barely covered the bills. I wanted to do something with my life but didn't have the money to go to school. I went to the county for help. They referred me to Pine Technical Employment & Training who later referred me to the Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services Youth Program. CMJTS helped me get into a customized Certified Nursing Assistant training program. I completed the class.

Shortly before I was supposed to take my state test, I had some medical complications. I worked with CMJTS to arrange a new test date with the school. On June 11, 2009, I took my state test for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and passed! Through help with job leads, in June 2009 I got a job at The Villages of North Branch working full time as a CNA. Thanks to the help of the Cambridge WorkForce Center and CMJTS, I now make a wage high enough to support me and my daughter."

program in Public Works at North Hennepin Technical College. Ryan stated, "I am so happy that I had this opportunity. I did not know what direction my life was going and where I would end up. I finally have a goal and am excited about the future."

Career Exploration

Young people in the CMJTS Youth Program have a multitude of career exploration activities. By investigating different careers using tools such as ISEEK, MNCareers, and the CAPS, COPS, COPES career assessments, participants begin to look at the convergence of their work skills, work interests and work values with career opportunities. Participants are required to complete their high school diploma or GED. Youth staff continually help participants make the connection between a high-wage, high-demand job and secondary education. Employment Specialists help youth fill out applications for post-secondary programs and financial aid. Tuition assistance and support services are offered through the Youth Program.

Two college students worked as Outreach-to-School Interns in local high schools, alternative schools, and area WorkForce Centers. They provided career exploration and post-secondary school exploration services to youth. The interns attended events for youth and parents advising and encouraging them to use the employment and training opportunities available through the WorkForce Center System. The interns also focused their presentations on the local labor market and the opportunities available in high-wage, high-demand occupations.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

The CMJTS Youth Program worked in coordination with the Willmar School District's Alternative Learning Center (ALC) to administer the Minnesota Youthbuild Program. Youthbuild keeps students at risk of dropping out of school engaged in working toward a high school diploma, learning valuable work readiness skills, and learning construction skills through hands-on experiences. Youthbuild provided weekly opportunities for youth to practice leadership skills, participate in community service projects, and attend career counseling sessions.

Community agencies created a partnership that enabled 30 local youth with disabilities to participate in a summer program and gain valuable work readiness training. The partnership between Functional Industries in Buffalo, the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District #877, and PRIDE Transitions created a work experience opportunity where youth not only learned how to use new tools and equipment on the job, but they also learned soft skills related to employment.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

In many cases, CMJTS youth participants are entering the workforce for the first time or have been unsuccessful in previous attempts at entry-level work.

Youth Employment Specialists work with CMJTS Placement Specialists and Workforce Development Advisors to enhance their employability.

Across industries, businesses are asking for employees with good “soft skills”. Mock interviews, soft-skill instruction, and leadership development with a focus on the importance of giving back to the community help prepare youth for the world of work. Manufacturing and healthcare camps, customer service and sales training, and the National Professional Certification in Customer Service and Sales® are available to youth to help them obtain specific training needed for manufacturing, healthcare, or retail jobs.

Other Funds Leveraged

Youth staff partner with school staff in forming leadership/mentoring groups. School districts support youth with in-kind staff time and space for meetings.

CMJTS accessed funds to provide manufacturing and healthcare summer camps. Several agencies provided in-kind staff time and space to ensure the success of the camps. Partners included local community and technical colleges, Pathways to Employment, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and work coordinators and WorkForce Center Business Services staff across the service area.

Another successful collaboration introduced youth to “in demand” healthcare careers. Students attended training for and became certified as First Responders - able to respond to local emergencies at school or in the community. They had the option of attending a pre-certified nursing assistant course to learn medical terminology, become familiar with the requirements of a certified nursing assistant, and learn about other careers in healthcare. East Central School donated the space for the training and a local employer, Pine Medical Center, offered the clinical instruction.

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc.

Contact Information

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Southwest MN Private Industry
Council, Inc.
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Area Served

Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood,
Jackson, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon,
Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood,
Rock, Swift, and Yellow Medicine
Counties

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	93
Youth with a Disability	59%
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	56%
Homeless/Runaway Youth.....	12%

Program Summary

Youth are referred to the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (SW MN PIC) through a variety of sources including schools, human service agencies, community corrections departments, parents and past or current participants. Services include work experience, career exploration activities, post-secondary tuition assistance, job seeking/retention assistance, transition services and support services. Key to the success of youth programming are the well established relationships with a wide range of partners including local high schools, education service cooperatives, post-secondary schools, businesses, civic groups, county human service agencies, group homes, community correction agencies, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Junior Achievement.

Work Experience

Through work experience, youth have the opportunity to:

- Experience employment in an environment with clear expectations
- Explore jobs in a career field of interest
- Understand and develop good work ethic and work habits
- Understand the value of a paycheck
- Work closely with an adult supervisor/mentor

Many students participating in work experience activities live in small towns with few employment options and no transportation. Sites are chosen based on students' interests and abilities.

Supervisors receive a monthly newsletter containing mentoring tips. The tips are based on research from the Search Institute and have been well received by the supervisors.

Career Exploration

All eligible applicants were invited to attend a summer workshop featuring the Career Choices curriculum, where the students discussed careers, personal goals, finances, possibilities and choices.

The Southwest Minnesota WorkForce Council's website, www.swmncareers.org, offers up-to-date labor market information specific to the southwest region. By highlighting high wage and high demand jobs, the Council aims to retain the future workforce in southwest Minnesota. Strategies to involve parents include links to the website on the parent portals of area schools.

The Outreach to Schools Program, previously offered to alternative schools in the service area, has been expanded to include any school in the area. Staff is located on-site to help students with job search and career planning. The students have the opportunity to partake in college visits and field trips to businesses, and receive one-on-one assistance with college and financial aid applications.

The Breaking Traditions annual event offers a day of hands-on career exploration activities for high school juniors in partnership with four campuses of Minnesota West Community and Technical College.

LifeSkills Day is an annual one day workshop for alternative school students. They have an opportunity to listen to a motivational keynote speaker and attend breakout sessions about issues such as personal finance, living independently, renting responsibilities, and customer service.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

The Southwest Minnesota Youth Council meets bi-monthly and provides opportunities for cross-training, increased knowledge of youth activities and new collaboration.

Other partnerships include internship programs at area schools and leadership initiatives for minority parents through the University of Minnesota Extension Service, as well as involvement in Community Transition Interagency Committees, Advisory Committees and Junior Achievement.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

Several high school classes visit local WorkForce Centers each year where students learn about the resources available, hear a presentation on high demand careers, learn about www.swmncareers.org and www.minnesotaworks.net websites and participate in mock-interviews. In addition, students from local alternative learning centers get a close-up look at high-growth and high-demand careers by taking field trips to area businesses.

Approximately 100 business and industry experts offer career exploration activities for over 1500 high school sophomores each year, allowing them to touch, feel and learn about the occupation through the annual Career Expos held at Southwest Minnesota State University and Minnesota West Community and Technical College.

Staff is also active with the Junior Achievement Board in Montevideo and delivering the curriculum to classrooms.

Other Funds Leveraged

Funds from MYP, WIA, Office of Justice Programs and Youth Intervention Programs are used jointly to increase program efficiency and complement and maximize services for youth. The Community Plus Program is a collaborative effort between the Private Industry Council, Lyon County Probation, and the City of Marshall. Adjudicated youth are given an opportunity to complete community service hours, pay restitution to their victims, learn work skills, and earn a wage if meeting program requirements.

Stephon

Growing up in an unstable household with no one to turn to for guidance, support, or affection, Stephon turned to the street life. His single ambition was to fight because it gave him a "sense of danger." He stated, "I wanted to take over the town. I wanted people to fear me."

After getting into serious trouble with the law, being placed in a detention center at the age of fifteen, and moving among several foster homes, Stephon became a father and was placed in a permanent foster home where his new life began. Now, at 17-years-old, Stephon is an excellent, supportive father, an amazing athlete, a good student, and a very hard worker. He is respectful and tries hard in school. Currently, Stephon works through the SW MN PIC at Hy-Vee and Gordan's Cutting Edge in addition to working with the PIC Community Plus Program. His employers have nothing but good to say about Stephon. "He has a great attitude and does what I ask him to do with no hesitation," stated one of his employers.

Stephon has shown astonishing leadership skills, is an excellent team player, is dependable, always uses his manners, and never complains. During the first class session, Stephon led a very engaging discussion trying to motivate the younger boys headed down the same path he had taken to change their attitudes. His words of advice for these boys and other troubled teens are, "Everything you do you WILL pay for in the future. I'm still paying for the things I did when I was 15 and will be paying for them for the rest of my life. It's not worth it."

When Stephon was asked what his inspiration is he said, "My daughter and not wanting to be feared. I want friends." More than anything Stephon wants to be a good role-model for his daughter in hopes she will grow up to be a successful adult. Stephon's new ambition is to become a police officer and he hopes to attend Ridgewater College in Willmar after he graduates from high school.

Ketin

Ketin has many challenges to deal with at a young age: divorce, a previously incarcerated parent and multiple moves, up to eight times in one year. Ketin turned to the Youth Program for help finding a new job. In his placement at Clean Up Our River Environment (CURE), Ketin has found much more than that. Ketin has gained a new appreciation for a town he has lived in his whole life and has experienced aspects of it that he never knew existed.

The following is a post from the blog the youth workers kept up this summer during their project. "I've been working for CURE now since the river trip in June and I'm proud to say that I'm glad that I got the job. I remember coming in to my interview looking my absolute best; I wore my best clothes because I really wanted this job. I'm also glad that I am a part of all the good that CURE is a part of, like painting the Milwaukee Railroad buildings and just helping people get on the river to see how amazing it is. The first time I was ever on the river was a week before I started working here and we used the kayaks and canoes from CURE. If I wouldn't have gotten this job I would not have been able to see the stuff I've seen even in the town I've been living in my whole life. I wouldn't ask for anybody else to work with." (See the entire blog at: <http://curesummerworker09.blogspot.com/>)

His work experience has not only helped him gain good work habits, he has built relationships with many members of the community he otherwise would not have met. His Youth Worker comments, "Ketin is definitely someone who has moved beyond his barriers and is now making the best steps he can towards his future. I am very fortunate to work with such a dedicated youth and am proud of the work he is doing in the community." Ketin is currently a senior in high school and is planning to go on for further education in the law enforcement/criminal justice field.



Program Summary

Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) provides employment and training services to youth in nine South Central Minnesota counties on behalf of South Central Workforce Council. MVAC utilizes Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), Workforce Investment Act (WIA), American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and Youth Intervention Program (YIP) funds to assure that South Central Minnesota’s neediest youth acquire the talents, skills, and knowledge to ensure their healthy transition to successful adult roles and responsibilities.

Impact of ARRA Funds

As a result of federal ARRA funds, MVAC was able to nearly triple the number of youth placed in jobs in the summer youth employment program. In the summer of 2008, the program served 150 youth; in the summer of 2009, MVAC served 385 youth. MVAC also expanded services to 22-24 year olds, a tremendous asset to this growing sector of the population who has fallen through the cracks: those who have graduated from high school, but are not yet become engaged in post-secondary education or employment. The expansion of services to this older age group also enabled the use of employers whose type of work requires an older, more mature worker. Manufacturing companies such as Crysteel Manufacturing, Lindsay Windows, Fin Tech, and MVAC Weatherization Carpenter Crew needed workers over age 18 to work in metal fabrication, welding, salvage, and carpentry positions. Agencies such as the YMCA, ACES, and the Sal, which provide youth development and recreational opportunities to youth, were interested in having youth leaders who were older. Some of these new opportunities were in the area of “green jobs”.

Work Experience

MVAC’s summer youth program engages an extremely disadvantaged group of youth who are at-risk and low income. Priority is given to serving the neediest youth including youth in out-of-home placement, homeless youth, pregnant and parenting youth, out-of-school youth, dropouts, youth with criminal records, youth experiencing substance abuse and/or mental health issues, youth of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and American Indians.

MVAC’s cost effective youth services reduce the future expense of out-of-home placement, public assistance, and the juvenile justice system. The work experience component has a significant impact in preparing youth for the workforce with relevant skills and knowledge for their future. It assists youth by providing:

- Access to jobs for low-income teens
- Exposure to work/careers
- Work experience and work-related workshops for low-income youth and their families
- Hands-on learning strategies
- Awareness of skills and competencies needed to meet employer requirements

South Central Workforce Council

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Area Served

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

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	155
Youth on Public Assistance	46%
Youth With a Disability	63%
Foster Youth	18%

Demareia

A native from Illinois, Demareia, 23, has always wanted to help others. She had graduated high school, and had been working since she was 15. When a few friends needed a place to stay she agreed, eventually being forced to move to Minnesota where she has family. Demareia applied for the Minnesota Valley Action Council's summer youth employment program, hoping for a fresh start. She stated on her application "I am very good with kids. It will be a new beginning for me. I just know I love working with people, showing people what I know and learning from them."

Demareia attended orientation in June, 2009, where she learned how to conduct interviews, and think about her future career. She chose to interview at the Nicollet County Human Services Department and began working the following week. To many she was seen as a boisterous and confident girl, until she got to work. She was quiet and shy, but grew in her confidence and self worth. She was a big help to the Nicollet County office and learned a lot about herself in the process. With the encouragement of her supervisors and MVAC staff, she applied and was accepted to South Central College to pursue her college dreams, and the hope to make a better life for her family.

Of the program, Demareia comments: "It has changed my life for the better." Demareia has learned skills through the MVAC summer youth employment program that she plans to carry with her and use in the future. She has a new positive out look on life and cannot wait to get started on this new journey.



- Worksites with high expectations and high standards of responsibility, respect, and hard work
- Work readiness skills
- Financial fitness skills
- Academic credit
- High school diploma
- Work experience, with tangible results, which is valued by youth participants and is a reminder to the community of the value of the contributions of youth
- Connections to other community resources and community service and leadership opportunities
- Re-engagement of older youth into the educational and employment world

Career Exploration

MVAC educates and encourages youth to pursue educational and employment options in high-growth industries and in-demand occupations and recruits employers who can provide work experiences in these careers. Examples of worksites offering exposure to high-demand occupations in the summer of 2009 included:

Green Jobs: Farm/City Project at South Central College; Habitat for Humanity Restore; MVAC Weatherization Crew; Department of Natural Resources; Earthworks Gardens; Lindsay Windows; P.C.'s for People; MVAC Again Thrift Store; Neighborhood Thrift Store; Salvation Army Thrift Store; Collectibles and Thrift Store; Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center

Manufacturing Jobs: Crysteel Manufacturing

Health Care Industry Jobs: A variety of hospitals, clinics, nursing homes and assisted-care facilities in the area.

Career exploration and planning was also provided to area youth in high schools via the Outreach to Schools Project, in which college students in the Student Counseling Program at Minnesota State University-Mankato enhance the career development services being provided.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

The South Central Workforce Council and Youth Council promote a collaborative approach to prepare youth for success in a global, demand-driven economy.

MVAC partnered with the following youth-serving agencies to implement projects during the summer of 2009:

- South Central College to offer the Farm/City Project which provided the opportunity for youth to learn how to plant, care for, and harvest a garden in order to allow families to be more self-sufficient in their own food production and consumption.
- The Boy Scouts of America to provide a day camp to summer youth participants in a three county area.
- Watonwan County and Nobles County Integration Collaborative to provide a three-day summer diversity camp to youth participants in Watonwan and Nobles Counties. The emphasis of the camp was hands-on experiences in career exploration.
- St. Peter School District to provide the St. Peter Read and Feed Program, offering free lunches and reading opportunities on a daily basis during the summer to any interested youth in the St. Peter area. MVAC summer youth participants worked to assist in preparing meals at the school and also to read to younger children who attended the meal time.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

MVAC recruited a variety of private and public businesses to serve as youth worksites. This summer, staff emphasized the opportunity to help stimulate the local economy by helping youth have a summer job, acquire new skills, and earn and spend money locally. Special requests were made for “green” jobs in the area of solar, geothermal, and wind power design. Examples of such jobs included retrofitting buildings, constructing energy-efficient housing, solar panel installation, reclaiming public park areas, or the recycling of computers.

Employers responded generously to the invitation to participate. MVAC worked with 218 employers in the nine-county area, with 385 youth placed in work experience opportunities. Evaluations from youth and employers alike were very positive and favorable toward the benefits of the summer work experience.

Other Funds Leveraged

The availability of MYP funds allowed WSA 7 to leverage additional funds to meet the needs of youth and the community, including:

ARRA - MVAC was able to quickly respond to the availability of ARRA funds as a result of utilizing MYP funds in previous years to provide a summer youth employment program. In less than 30 days, MVAC designed and implemented a program that met the funding source guidelines and also met the needs of the neediest youth in the nine-county service area. The number of youth served tripled, and the length of the work experience more than doubled in some cases, going from ten weeks up to twenty-two weeks.

Angela

At the age of 17, Angela became a mother. She maintained her 11th grade schoolwork as best as she could for the remainder of the 2009 school year, while trying to look for employment. She applied to the MVAC Summer Youth Employment Program and wrote, "I am interested in the Employment Program, because I think it could teach me great skills that will help in the long run."

Angela was accepted to the program and attended the first workshop in June, 2009. She learned and practiced interview skills and completed a career assessment. Angela discovered she would be a good fit in a career field using her natural artistic, enterprising, and people skills. She interviewed at ACES, a Community Education Childcare program, and began her work experience there on June 15.

When Angela first started she was shy and held back from engaging with children at ACES. Another challenge Angela encountered within her first few weeks of work was the illness of her own child. Through the guidance and encouragement of ACES worksite supervisors and staff along with MVAC staff monitors, Angela has grown immensely and improved her work skills during ten weeks in the program. One worksite supervisor commented, "Angela knows the names of all 40 kids now and is a great help to the ACES program". Another staff member stated, "Angela knows exactly what she needs to do whenever parents or children have questions. She has grown so much".

Angela has received two awards for her good attendance, dependability, initiative, and communication skills and was able to move into her own apartment with her child. She also participated in a teamwork and career building workshop provided by the Boy Scouts in Mankato. Angela stated, "If it wasn't for MVAC, I don't know what I would be doing or how I would support my family. It is a good opportunity."

Her future plans include completing her high school diploma, doing more research on a future career choice, enrolling into a post-secondary institution, and eventually owning her own business. On top of these future goals, Angela plans on working on her "new mom" skills also.

WIA - WIA youth program funding allows MVAC to provide educational opportunities and life-skills training that help establish good work habits along with structured, well-supervised work experience. Positive results include youth remaining in school, dropouts returning to school, juvenile offenders able to pay off their restitution, savings realized to reduced crime and judicial system costs, development of responsible work habits, work readiness credentials, citizenship skills, and parenting skills, and savings to taxpayers through less dependency on public assistance programs.

YIP - This program focuses on youth in foster care and those youth aging out of foster care. Work experience, career exploration, and specific workshops to boost self-esteem, enhance personal development, and to address transition issues were provided to foster youth.



Angela's hard work and perseverance were key ingredients for her successful work experience at a local community education childcare program in south central Minnesota.

Program Summary

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) administers several youth programs throughout Southeast Minnesota. Eligible youth benefit from a comprehensive assessment that results in the development of a strategic education and employment plan. Youth may select from a variety of components that meet their needs such as career planning, tuition assistance, support services, work readiness preparation and paid or unpaid work experience. Trained counselors serve as case managers to support youth through the process of working to eliminate barriers to reaching their individual goal.

The Workforce Investment Act Programs (WIA) are federally-funded employment and training interventions for youth who are economically disadvantaged and have a risk factor that prevents them from successfully achieving their education or employment goals. Youth participate in activities that will build skill and confidence as well as prepare them for future employment opportunities. WIA programs serve two populations, each with a different focus.

- The WIA - Younger Youth Program assists youth to stay in school or to return to school to complete a High School diploma or GED. Younger youth are encouraged to match interests with experience to prepare them for future careers.
- The WIA - Older Youth Program is focused on specific career interventions to assist youth in building a strong portfolio of skills, work experience and education as they move into their chosen career field. Older youth may select components that lead them into one of the careers determined to be “in-demand” by the WDI Board of directors.

The Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) is a state-funded program focused on youth who are economically disadvantaged or have a risk factor that is a significant barrier to employment or further education. MYP funding serves over 200 additional youth each year who would otherwise not be eligible for these services. In most cases WDI serves youth through MYP in partnership with other providers in the local community. These youth are typically in need of a quick intervention to keep them from moving in the direction of much more serious issues or risky behaviors.

Impact of ARRA Funds

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was a new strategy to address the employment needs of low-income and at-risk youth in a time of economic downturn. This summer, WDI more than doubled the number of youth served as a result of ARRA funding. Many youth between the ages of 21 to 24 came to WDI who had never worked before. Many had been through some college or technical training but because of the economy they were unable to find employment. ARRA allowed WDI staff to help these young adults get on track and prepared to move into a career.

Workforce Development, Inc. (Southeastern Minnesota)

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Area Served

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

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	187
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	65%
High School Dropout	50%
Juvenile Offender	39%

Allen

Allen came into the Youth Program with training in Mechanics from the National Guard. He had held various mechanic positions in the past, along with other odd jobs. He knew he wanted to be a mechanic and he knew he needed to support his family; he has a daughter and another on the way. Allen worked as many hours as he could, and made entry-level wages. He was an extremely hard worker, but had no real vision for the future.

Allen went to work as part of a team that painted the Dodge County Sheriff's maintenance garage. The owner of the painting company wrote, "He was our go-to guy on the painting crew and worked hard." The Youth Program then placed Allen at McNeilus Steel, Inc. to gain further experience and workplace skills. Their Human Resources Manager expressed interest in placing Allen in their truck shop when he found out about Allen's mechanical background in the military.

"My experience with McNeilus Steel has been great." Allen said that he learned a lot working there.

Allen applied for a scholarship to attend a Diesel Mechanic program at Riverland Community College. He wrote in his scholarship application, "They have offered to keep me on part-time as I go through the training program. I have a good possibility of being hired for a position in the diesel shop upon successful completion of the Diesel Mechanic Program." He also wrote how he dreamed of opening his own shop some day, all while providing for his family.

WDI staff received a phone call from the Human Resources Manager asking if Allen would be interested in applying for a full-time, benefitted position in the steel warehouse, starting immediately. Allen applied for the job, along with four other highly qualified candidates, and he received a job offer two days later!

Allen works full-time at McNeilus Steel, and is planning to register for spring semester classes. His manager at McNeilus Steel said he is willing to work with Allen's school schedule so that he can work and continue his education at the same time.

Work Experience

Well over 600 youth participated in WDI's Summer Employment Programs throughout the ten counties of Southeast Minnesota. Most youth started by participating in a two-week class to prepare them for looking for work and to help them to understand what it takes to successfully keep their job. For many youth this was new information, as they had not worked in the past. At the completion of their classes the youth were placed on a community work team to gain skill and experience that they could offer to future employers. Employers waited eagerly to be matched with appropriate youth and continue their learning opportunity. Many of the youth have been offered jobs at the end of their summer work assignment with the employer. Employers state that in most cases the WDI-trained youth are better prepared for work than youth who have not had this employment counseling. Success stories of these youth can be found on the Blog of the WDI web site: www.wfdi.ws

Over 66% of the 620 youth enrolled this summer stated that they had little or no work history. Twenty-seven percent of participants were out-of-school youth without a diploma; 39% were youth with disabilities; 30% were youth offenders on probation. Each of these risk factors poses a significant barrier to finding and keeping employment for the youth.

Career Exploration

New for WDI this year was the addition of the Career Readiness Certificate by ACT. This certificate provides a language for the youth to speak to future employers regarding their skill level and why they are a good candidate for employment. It is especially beneficial to combine the Certificate with the information on careers-in-demand in the region and provide youth with a Job Profile of the career they are interested in from ACT.

Private Sector Involvement

An Open Letter from TJ Maxx

Reprinted from WDI's Career Connect E-Letter, September 2009, Vol. 2, Issue 1

This summer TJ Maxx was able to partner with the WorkForce Center in Rochester, MN on a project funded by the government called the Summer Youth Employment Project (SYEP). The program has been a huge success.

The SYEP provided an avenue for TJ Maxx to continue to hire and staff at a time when employers were not hiring. The stimulus dollars provided the funding, and we were able to be the worksite. The partnership with the WorkForce Center made this a success. After many weeks of figuring out how the stimulus program worked we were able to get it up and running. While providing a team oriented environment, where everyone needs to work together to achieve

a common goal, TJ Maxx was able to raise the level of service our customers have come to expect. That was possible because of the work experience the SYEP provided.

The participants learned what it takes to be part of a successful team and that does not mean just showing up to work. Although attendance is a top priority here at TJ Maxx, flexibility in scheduling, being able to change direction when needed, working with others, accepting feedback, and using that feedback to become a well-rounded employee, are all qualities that are needed for in an individual to succeed. The commitment needs to come from the individual. Once we have that, the possibilities really are endless.

A work experience is a huge benefit to someone looking to get into the workforce with an employer that meets their interests. A work experience really opens doors for individuals looking to succeed in the workplace. The benefits of this are endless. As the employer, we provide the environment to succeed; the employee needs to bring the dedication, commitment, willingness to learn, etc. When all this comes together, a successful experience, not mention future employment, is possible.

TJ Maxx looks forward to a long standing partnership with the WorkForce Center and, as one of our corporate commitments to become an 'Employer of Choice'. We're excited about what the future holds. Mike Ott, - Store Manager

Hennepin County Human Services/ Public Health

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Area Served

Hennepin County
(excl. City of Minneapolis)

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	389
Youth With a Disability	76%
Basic Skills Deficient Youth	69%
Youth on Public Assistance	28%

Program Summary

Tree Trust offers the following summer work experiences to MYP-eligible youth through a program called Youth Conservation Corps:

Landscape Crew

Youth work on a supervised crew of eight to complete significant landscaping projects that improve the community environment and build youth competencies in employment skills. Youth work two to three eight-hour days per week, can earn a merit-based raise, have the opportunity to get elective academic credit for their participation, and receive achievement awards at a recognition picnic. Tree Trust employed 272 Hennepin County youth in Landscape Crew positions during the summer of 2009.

Individual Site

Youth capable of working independently are placed with community-serving organizations to do clerical, custodial, child care, and customer service work. Youth work an average of 20 hours per week and have the opportunity to earn elective academic credit. Tree Trust employed 150 Hennepin County youth in Individual Site positions during the summer of 2009.

Enclave Site

Youth with more limiting disabilities work with a job coach at a school site as office or janitorial assistants. Youth are recruited and supported directly by the site, and they also have the opportunity to earn elective academic credit for their work experience. Tree Trust employed 220 Hennepin County youth in Enclave Site positions during the summer of 2009.

Work Experience

Youth who work on Tree Trust’s Landscape Crews are part of a tradition of excellence that goes back thirty years. By working side-by-side with their fellow crew members and their highly-trained crew leader, youth develop a strong sense of teamwork as well as pride in their ability to complete challenging tasks. The projects they complete stand as testaments to a summer spent working hard, learning life lessons, and developing into strong, reliable workers.

In 2009, Landscape Crew youth workers completed projects in Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Eden Prairie, Edina, Golden Valley, Maple Grove, Maple Plain, Minnetonka, Plymouth and St. Louis Park. They built staircases, decks, docks, and retaining walls; planted trees, maintained trails, and installed fences; and made Hennepin County’s city parks, regional parks, nature centers, and public spaces more accessible, safe, and fun.

Youth who work in Individual Site positions benefit from the years of history Tree Trust has of developing diverse sites and jobs that match participants’ needs and goals. In 2009, youth developed networks of working relationships, explored career paths, and improved their work skills while providing hours of valuable service as office assistants, childcare assistants, landscapers, maintenance workers,

and program assistants to community-serving organizations such as: HIRED, LaCreche Early Childhood Centers, Park Center High School, City of Hopkins City Hall, Emergency Food Shelf Network, and Hmong American Mutual Assistance Association.

Youth demonstrate the value of their work experience by growing stronger in skills like attendance, acceptance of constructive criticism, work attitude, and initiative. To quantify the participants' growth, crew leaders and supervisors evaluate each youth at the beginning and end of the program for competency in thirteen different employment skills. For 2009, 72% of youth showed overall improvement on their second evaluation.

On-site learning experiences encourage youth to appreciate the connection between what they learn at school and the skills and knowledge required on the job site. Landscape Crew members' participation in Tree Trust's TeamTech lessons allows them to earn elective school credit while learning valuable employment-readiness skills, putting math and writing skills into a work context, and developing a connection to their community.

Youth who work at Individual Sites also have the opportunity to earn elective academic credit by completing a packet designed to develop their employment-readiness skills and strengthen the connection between school and work. Youth who work at Enclave Sites can earn elective credit through the school at which they work.

Career Exploration

Youth who participate in Tree Trust's Youth Conservation Corps have the opportunity to explore a variety of career paths. Whether they enjoy their summer job and decide to pursue a similar career path or dislike the work and are inspired to strive for something different, the exposure and experience youth gain during their summer with Tree Trust are invaluable to their development as workers. When asked, "How has your experience this summer prepared you for future jobs?" one youth commented, "It taught me how to get along better with kids. I might want to become a teacher".

The recent emphasis on a new class of "green collar" workers suggests that landscape services will be in demand for many years to come. Youth who work on Landscape Crews gain hands-on, technical, and practical experience working with materials like modular blocks and timbers, techniques like leveling, and tools like block saws and masonry chisels. Should they decide to pursue a "green collar" career, their experience with Tree Trust will prove invaluable to the industry.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

The success of Tree Trust's Youth Conservation Corps relies on a solid history of collaboration with organizations that serve youth and/or have an interest in building the skills of future workers. Area middle, junior, and high schools as well as alternative and transition schools

Jonathan

Jonathan first found out about Tree Trust through a friend who said that the Youth Conservation Corps program could be a "good working experience for the summer." Jonathan tried it out, liked it, and returned to Tree Trust for the past three years.

He is starting as a senior in high school in the fall. The Youth Conservation Corps was his first job experience and he keeps coming back to it. "It helps me get a stronger upper body." He also likes being able to make new friends and spend time with them while working on the crew.

He started the job thinking that it would be extremely physically demanding. "I was expecting back-breaking manual labor," he says. While he finds it strenuous, he is able to manage the physical labor. He recalls his first summer working with Tree Trust as challenging. His crew was building a boardwalk, and there was no place near their worksite where they could seek shelter on an especially sunny or rainy day. Jonathan is more used to the demands of the job, and now there is little that fazes him.

He credits several improvements in his behavior to his experience working for Tree Trust. "It gave me a little bit of real world experience," he says, "and made me much more of a team player. Before I would always just try and get away with doing the bare minimum. I've begun to work very hard since I started working with Tree Trust."



Christina

Christina is a rising sophomore at Cooper High School, who has spent her summer working at Park Center High School for the second year. She works in the office for four hours everyday, completing a variety of tasks such as stamping school books, preparing mail, and answering phone calls.

She found out about Tree Trust through a friend, and applied to the Youth Conservation Corps. She chose an indoor worksite rather than landscaping work. She has made friends at her workplace and finds the work environment comfortable.

While she babysat before, her job with Park Center High School was her first real job experience. She certainly enjoys it. "Everyone is really nice," she declares.

Christina's supervisor for both years, Macky, is highly impressed with Christina's superior ability and skills. "She is a very good worker," Macky asserts. "She is serious about her job and doesn't have to think twice about the tasks that are assigned to her." Her attendance is very good.

Macky finds Christina to be a trustworthy worker who knows just what is expected of her. She was "really, really happy" to have Christina back this year. "I wish all my other interns were like her," Macky says.



play a large role in getting eligible youth interested in Tree Trust and assisting them with completing their applications.

Because of Tree Trust's reputation for quality work and programs, local parks, nature centers, schools, libraries, nonprofit organizations, and other community-serving organizations embrace the chance to host at-risk youth at their sites and help them grow as workers. Without this network of enthusiastic partners committed to improving the futures of Twin Cities youth, the Youth Conservation Corps could not thrive.

In addition to partnering with schools for youth recruitment and with various organizations for job sites, Tree Trust works with the Northeast Metro Area Learning Center (ALC) so that youth can earn academic credit for their summer job and on-site learning experiences. The ALC tracks youth hours and participation and certifies their credits for acceptance at local schools.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

The Youth Conservation Corps relies heavily on cooperation with local public sector and non-profit employers, and the program is designed to be mutually beneficial to Tree Trust and the employers who act as host sites.

Tree Trust began a partnership with Three Rivers Park District in 2007 and renewed it in 2008 and again in 2009, when the park district identified and purchased materials for four different projects in Hennepin County. Thanks to Three Rivers Park District's investment in youth and in the development of future workers, Tree Trust was able to employ 64 youth to complete valuable landscaping projects. Should any of these youth decide to pursue a career in landscape construction, the experience and skills gained during their summer with Tree Trust will be highly valued by organizations like Three Rivers Park District.

In 2009, youth worked in Individual and Enclave Site positions in seven of the top fifteen "Occupations in Demand" identified by DEED. Jobs were created at health care facilities to expose youth to nursing – the job in highest demand. Youth in medical settings – such as Children's Dental Services and Park Nicollet Health Services – interacted with health care professionals, learned medical terminology and how to chart and record data, and provided direct customer service to a diverse group of patients and their families. Jobs were also created in high-demand areas of retail, food preparation, and service work.

Other Funds Leveraged

The availability of MYP funds allows Tree Trust to leverage funds from corporation and foundation grants as well as individual donors to serve and support more youth.

Program Summary

The Carver County Summer Youth Program (SYP) offers: interest assessment, work experience that includes job-seeking skill development (such as filling out applications, interviewing) and quality evaluations to assist the youth in developing appropriate work behavior, support services (such as transportation costs and tuition for on-line classes), as well as the opportunity to earn academic credit for some of the SYP components.

Impact of ARRA Funds

The extra funds provided through ARRA assisted Carver County in expanding the Summer Youth Program in 2009. First and foremost, the funds allowed more youth to be hired than in previous years (21 hired in 2008 compared to 36 in 2009) and pay them at a higher wage. Secondly, the funds provided the opportunity to contract with Tree Trust and set up a work crew at Carver Park (part of Three Rivers Park District). Lastly, Carver County was able to provide support services that had not been possible in the past, such as helping to pay for transportation to worksites and on-line courses that the youth took in the Health Care Careers program.

Work Experience

Carver County's 2009 Summer Youth Program consisted of five components:

- Youthbuild – collaboration with Carver-Scott Educational Co-op. Youthbuild employees learn all aspects of the construction trade through hands-on and classroom instruction. Youth have the opportunity to earn up to four credits during the summer to be able to graduate on time with their classes.



Carver County

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Area Served

Carver County

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	15
Youth With a Disability	80%
Foster Youth	13%
Basic Skills Deficient Youth	7%

Blake (center) was a Governor's Award Recipient for the Carver County Tree Trust Crew that worked at Carver Park (Three Rivers Park District) during 2009. The Governor's Award is issued in honor of youths' outstanding work and attendance over the summer. Blake is pictured with Kathy Srock (Carver County Employment Counselor) and David Hawes (Tree Trust).

Lucas

Lucas is a 15 year-old student at Chaska Middle School West. He was referred to the program by his school counselor because he has a learning disability and was a potential drop out. He was also enrolled in SOAR, a program that assists students with school work so they can improve their grades and stay in school.

Lucas was accepted into the program and worked in the custodial department at Ridgeview Medical Center (RMC) in Waconia. He assisted the maintenance crew members in many areas, including painting, groundskeeping, cleaning and shredding documents. As part of the maintenance/custodial team, he was given a lot of responsibility and issued a security badge which granted him access to all areas of the medical center.

Lucas said he enjoyed his work experience and it showed by the positive comments from his supervisor at RMC. His supervisor stated that Lucas has a good work ethic, is a hard worker and follows directions very well. He also commended Lucas on being an excellent representative of Carver County and the youth program. The supervisor enjoyed having Lucas work at the site so much that he invited him back to work during the school year. Lucas will be returning to school this year in Chaska and intends to return to work at RMC as well.



- Health Care Careers - collaboration with Park Nicollet clinics. Participants have an opportunity to learn all aspects of working in a medical clinic and see that you do not have to be a doctor or nurse to work in the ever-growing health care field. The Health Care Careers program also has a classroom component and allows the youth to earn credits during the summer.
- Vocational Outreach Services (VOS) – collaboration with District #287. District #287 provides job coaches for the youth at the worksite, serving youth with disabilities (such as deaf and hard-of-hearing and non-verbal autism).
- Tree Trust – new work experience component for 2009 at Carver Park where 2 crews worked on fire rings for Three Rivers Park District. The youth were able to earn credit during the summer.
- Scattered worksites – youth placed at area libraries, Ridgeview Medical Center, Extreme Kids (child care program at Chaska Community Center), a nursing home and Gale Woods farm.

Career Exploration

Carver County assists youth participants with a career interest assessment. During the summer, staff reviews the results with the youth and helps them identify some possible future career options based on their interests.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

Carver County collaborates with partners in the community, such as Carver-Scott Educational Co-op, Park Nicollet Clinics, Three Rivers Park District, District #287, and Tree Trust.

Program Summary

Approximately 2,670 Minneapolis youth were provided with critical employment and training opportunities during this past year. For the most part, these opportunities consisted of paid work experience and other work-related components such as work readiness training, access to job coaches, and assistance with transportation to work. Many other youth took advantage of other events such as the 2009 Minneapolis Teen Job Fair. Intensive case management focusing on work preparedness, education (secondary and post-secondary) and employment goal setting is the hallmark of Year-Round WIA services, while exposure to careers, work readiness, mentorship opportunities, contributing to a local non-profit, paid work experience and academic enrichment is the theme of summer employment. Employed youth are able to help support themselves and their families, while providing valuable contributions to their employer. The employer is able to develop the future workforce while gaining from the diversity of the youth they employ. Employers play a vital role in helping youth understand the important connection between school and work.

Impact of ARRA Funds

During the summer of 2009, more than 80 businesses in Minneapolis benefited from employing youth because of ARRA funding. These employers provided a safe, nurturing work environment for 451 youth who needed help in obtaining and holding a job. Earnings were infused in the community while youth were exposed to viable career paths in targeted industries such as healthcare, green-related work and construction. Examples of new partnerships that offered unique services include: the Minneapolis Urban League's Construction Internship Program, in which youth found work in the building and construction trades while receiving OSHA certification and work supports such as tools and work boots, and African Community Services, which served 29 Oromo and Somali recent immigrant youth with multiple barriers to gainful employment.

Work Experience

A wide variety of subsidized and unsubsidized job opportunities are available in order to match the interests and developmental needs of the youth to the job. Employers provide much more than a job site; they provide opportunity for the youth to lead, they mentor the youth, and they provide the guidance that many youth need while experiencing the world of work for the first time. Along with work experience, 440 youth attended class and 160 received high school credit for doing so. More than 1,400 STEP-UP youth participated in work-readiness training prior to the start of their job, while 113 STEP-UP interns were paired one-to-one with business mentors representing employers such as General Mills, Faegre and Benson and Xcel Energy.

In another project, 216 youth with disabilities were employed in positions such as park maintenance trainees, merchandise handlers, teacher aides, landscapers, childcare aides, food service assistants, laundry workers, recyclers and stockers. A unique partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) allows for these opportunities for youth who would be unlikely to find work on their own. MPS

Minneapolis Employment and Training Program

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Area Served

City of Minneapolis

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	315
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	87%
Youth on Public Assistance	69%
Youth With a Disability.....	11%

develops the job sites, provides job coaches and transportation while METP provides youth wages and payroll services.

Azia

Azia spent her summer with STEP-UP working at the Hmong American Mutual Assistance Association (HAMAA). She worked with children in HAMAA's summer enrichment program and also performed administrative tasks.



During the first couple of weeks on the job, Azia struggled with acclimating to an organization that served primarily the Hmong community and was staffed with mostly native Hmong speakers. Azia had little previous exposure to the Hmong community and culture.

After a rocky start trying to adjust to a new environment, Azia began to learn more about the Hmong language and culture. She began to learn and then use some words and phrases in Hmong, helping her to become more engaged with her co-workers.

Now, Azia views her experience as valuable to helping her reach her goal of becoming a doctor someday. She understands that she will need to be able to work with people from all backgrounds and cultures in her chosen profession. "It was really hard at first," comments Azia, "but after a while, I felt like I just fit in."

Azia was selected to represent the youth interns at the end-of-summer STEP-UP Celebration, telling nearly 1,000 interns, parents, mentors, and employers about her experience with STEP-UP. At age 15, Azia will be experiencing another new adventure this fall as she begins her high school experience at North High School. Her positive experience at HAMAA this past summer encouraged her to embrace new opportunities, while helping her feel like she is on a pathway to a successful future.

Career Exploration

The RICE (Reaching Immigrants with Care and Education) Program at Asian Media Access (AMA) is a great example of a career exploration program for youth who can benefit from exposure to in-demand career pathways. Partnering with Ramen Ya (an Asian American and Pacific Islander girls shelter), AMA provided employability training to limited English proficient, recent immigrant, homeless/runaways and foster care youth with a focus on technological occupations and a special emphasis on multi-media and information technology. Youth conducted interviews with North Minneapolis residents to obtain their opinions and learn about their desire to affect the racial tension, socio/economic injustice and violence existing in their neighborhood. Their interviews helped formulate video vignettes and poems that were publicized on the "Youth in Charge" website and would also be used in the future while hosting focus groups with other youth, community members and city officials. Youth also participated in radio and television talk shows as crew, hosts and guests.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

For many years, METP has utilized the services of DEED staff housed at both the North and South Minneapolis WorkForce Centers for intake and eligibility of STEP-UP youth applicants, the eventual placement of interns, worksite monitoring during the summer work experience and assisting with the enormous task of payroll services for hundreds of youth. The Youth Council has held a long standing belief that the WorkForce Centers in Minneapolis need to be known as a resource for youth as well as adults, so this collaboration is most beneficial to Minneapolis youth.

METP partnered with Minnesota Transitions Charter School to provide 45 teens with the opportunity to earn high school credit along with paid vocational experiences this summer. The teens faced multiple barriers to successful long term employment, including: homelessness, learning disabilities, prior juvenile offenses, foster care placement and being a teen parent. Construction and health careers related work were specifically targeted in 2009. Youth were exposed to Home Health Aide, Emergency Medical Technician and Nursing Assistant training. Construction interns completed intensive work readiness training prior to job site placement and once on the job, they transitioned from working with a crew leader to working under the supervision of a construction partner. Construction partners represented both the private sector and non-profit community. This vocational collaboration has proven successful in dramatically increasing the graduation rate of participating youth.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

The University of Minnesota has been a partner to STEP-UP since its inception. As a part of the University's commitment to grow future business men and women, a new initiative called Junior Entrepreneurs

of Minnesota (JEM) was piloted this summer. JEM recruited STEP-UP interns to participate in a three-week classroom session led by Carlson School of Management professors. Twenty-three youth completed the training which taught business model development and the skills necessary to start and grow a business. Interns presented business plans they constructed during a final project event that was held just prior to their six-week STEP-UP internship. The University also hosted a Goldy Gopher Day for 107 youth this summer, focusing on exploring college and career path options.

Many other private sector partners gain from and contribute to METP's STEP-UP program. During 2009, 172 employers hosted interns, including U. S. Bancorp, O'Reilly Auto Parts, Thrivent Financial, Best Buy and Target.

Other Funds Leveraged

METP would not be able to operate the STEP-UP program at its current capacity (1,276 youth working this past summer) without the ability to leverage City funding. City funds supported work readiness training for 1,450 STEP-UP participants and the development of 656 jobs for youth, including 523 unsubsidized work experiences. The number of youth served via STEP-UP has grown each year because of leveraged funds. In 2009, employers paid over \$1 million in unsubsidized wages



City of Minneapolis STEP-UP interns working at Phillips Community Television interview citizens to include their opinions in the videos they produce.

Anoka County Workforce Council

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Area Served

Anoka County

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served 97
Youth With a Disability..... 63%
Basic Skills Deficient Youth..... 94%
Youth on Public Assistance 29%

Program Summary

The Anoka County Job Training Center's Youth Program provides year-round services to at-risk youth ages 14 – 21. The Youth Council has identified economically disadvantaged and foster youth as priorities in Anoka County. The staff works closely with Anoka County Public Assistance and Foster Care Departments to recruit eligible youth. The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and Diversionary Work Program (DWP) employment services are integrated at the Anoka County WorkForce Center, allowing for close coordination and referral of teen parents and youth from families on MFIP. Staff networks with the school districts within Anoka County to identify other youth that need services, especially those attending Alternative Learning Centers. Completion of secondary educational programs and preparation for more skill training are primary goals with the younger participants.

Youth initially go through group assessment activities where staff gathers information about their school progress, their basic skills levels in math and reading and their individual needs and potential barriers to success. The youth are introduced to the World of Work and start to learn job-keeping and retention skills.

Youth meet one-on-one with a youth counselor to develop their individual plan for success. The plan includes completion of their high school diploma in combination with a work experience. Staff monitors school attendance and academic progress, and staff also communicates with worksite supervisors continually to track the youth's progress at the worksite and their continued development and growth in their job skills.

Impact of ARRA Funds

As a result of the extended age to 24 years under ARRA, the Youth Council determined that older youth who are unemployed/ underemployed and out of school with no postsecondary training would be the priorities for these additional resources. Strategic outreach and recruitment strategies were developed as a means to serve these youth. These efforts enabled staff to more effectively serve a group of youth in the community that has been struggling with high unemployment rates and lack of meaningful job opportunities. The increased funding through ARRA also allowed many more youth to be served than in previous years in the younger age categories, including many more youth who are part of families that are new to public assistance programs due to the economic downturn and recession. Increased earnings allowed many youth to be financial contributors to their home and to help support the family in times of economic crisis.

Work Experience

Staff works one-on-one with youth to find a meaningful work experience based on their skill level and occupational interest. Students are matched with supervisors that understand the key role they have as mentors to the youth.

This year, youth have worked at a variety of worksites including: libraries, city public works, Veteran Services, hospitals, child-care

programs, food shelves, senior care centers, YMCA day camps, schools, nature centers, parks, retail stores and county facilities. One new worksite this year was at Metro North Learning Center where the youth worker assisted learners in building computer skills and English skills, as many of the students in the Learning Center are non-English speaking.

Staff also worked on expanding employment opportunities in “Green Jobs” and partnering with the Community Action Program on a Weatherization Project. Youth worked in low income households throughout the community completing building projects that helped increase the energy efficiency of area homes. This not only was an enormous benefit to the community homeowners, but also gave the youth hands-on work skills in a new and emerging occupational field.

Anoka County also partnered with Tree Trust this year. Youth crews completed two conservation projects in their communities and this was an excellent experience for the youth on both work crews. Youth gained hands-on building skills that are very marketable. The crew leader went through special training through Tree Trust to provide not only work skills, but also soft skills, creating a mentoring relationship with the youth. Students who worked on this project and completed at least 60 hours of work experience earned up to two elective credits and also received on-site training utilizing personal laptop computers.

Career Exploration

Enrolled in-school youth between the ages of 14 – 18 attended a monthly class called “Starting Block”. Topics covered in this class include: Dressing for Success, Green Jobs, Diversity on the Job, Time Management, Work Expectations, Handling Difficult People, Living on Your Own, Budgeting, Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS), Where Are the Jobs?, Resumes and Interviewing Skills. Youth work as a group to enhance communication skills and leadership skills through the activities and interactions. Planning for their future is key as staff focus on Career Exploration and exploring colleges, college programs, financial aid and possible entry into the military.

Another set of classes was added for older youth, typically 22-24, who are currently not in school. This group completed seven modules covering key topics such as:

- career planning
- skill and interest assessment
- computer skills
- occupational research including occupations in demand and green jobs
- budgeting
- job search techniques, resumes and cover letters

The young people developed career portfolios which included their individual test results, employability skills, identification of transferrable skills, career research results and their educational plan. Staff continues to work one-on-one with these youth to develop their personal employment and training plans and goals.

Sara



When Sara came to the Anoka County WorkForce Center she was living with a friend and did not have custody of her young daughter. She needed to secure a job and a place to live so that she could be reunited with her daughter. Sara said that she wanted to do construction or outdoor work. Staff worked diligently at finding suitable employment for Sara and during this process she was able to find an apartment.

Sara was placed at Salvation Army Harvest Corps where she works as an indoor and outdoor maintenance assistant. Since she started her employment she has been able to get custody of her daughter. She has been attending the Career Exploration and Assessment Workshops and has expressed an interest in going on for more schooling, perhaps getting a Low Voltage License or possibly a Boilers License. Before that happens, she knows she needs to complete her GED and plans to attend class at the Metro North Learning Center. The accomplishment that Sara is most proud of is that in September she will be celebrating one year of sobriety. She said that just getting the job “Gives you something to get up and do everyday”.

In a short time frame Sara has realized many accomplishments from securing stable housing, working and earning an income for her family, but most importantly she has been reunited with her daughter. Since her participation in the youth program, her self-confidence has been lifted and each day she is making progress toward reaching her personal goals.

Eric

Eric came to the U.S. from Ghana where he worked for the Red Cross and the U.S. Armed Forces. He speaks French and English as well as his native language. When he arrived, he began working on his GED but had to drop out before he finished because he needed to find employment.

In the spring Eric was enrolled in the Youth Program. He expressed that he was interested in working immediately. Staff worked on developing a job assignment for him in building maintenance at Crest View Senior Communities. If not for the age extension under the federal ARRA program, Eric would have found it very challenging to find employment in this current economy.

According to the site supervisor, Eric is doing an excellent job and while working he has also managed to complete his coursework and just recently received his Nursing Assistant Certification. Staff is working with him on his resume and he intends to apply for a position as a Certified Nursing Assistant at Crest View. He has already demonstrated to Crest View that he possesses excellent job keeping skills and can be a valued member of their team. Staff also just met with him to start the process of getting back on track to receive his GED and pursuing other training opportunities.

His supervisor speaks highly of Eric and states that "If Crest View had an open position in the maintenance department he would give the job to Eric". This is a testament to the value of linking youth to work experience opportunities. Crest View has been a valued community partner with the youth program and as a result Eric has benefited from this experience.



Through the Outreach to Schools Project, Career Guide Interns focus on serving those youth who are not eligible for specialized services. They offer job search assistance, career exploration, career planning, and college exploration to youth both on an individual basis and also in classroom settings at three area alternative schools.

Collaboration With Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

The youth staff works closely with all school districts in Anoka County for referral of eligible youth. Staff also participates in the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meetings and focuses on the transitional employment goals for youth with disabilities. This summer Anoka County partnered with three of the largest school districts in serving young people with disabilities. Anoka County provided job placement, wages and workers compensation and the school districts provided the job coaching, transportation and coordination at the sites.

Many organizations such as high schools, middle schools, teen parent programs, Lino Lakes Juvenile Facilities and alternative schools enjoy touring the WorkForce Center and seeing the specialized services available for youth, including a Youth Area identified in the Resource Center where young people use information tailored for their needs. Staff offers orientations to youth groups, including demonstrations of how to use MCIS and Minnesota Works.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

Youth staff visits with local employers to continually get a pulse on youth employment in Anoka County and the surrounding communities. The Career Guide Intern constantly updates a list of employers in the County who are hiring youth. This information is valuable to youth who are in an active job search. Staff continues to develop new worksites for youth placement based on career goals and needs in the community. Youth staff also serves on Work Experience Advisory Committees in two of the local school districts.

Other Funds Leveraged

The Job Training Center has a goal of providing services to all youth by partnering with other agencies within the WorkForce Center. Youth may receive services through Rehabilitation Services, Minnesota Family Investment Program and other agencies that are co-located in the building. Staff receives ongoing training and education regarding area resources enabling them to make referrals to other agencies.

Program Summary

Dakota - Scott Workforce Service Area (WSA) provides services to economically disadvantaged and at-risk youth through multiple venues. Summer employment options in the two counties are varied and rewarding. In Dakota County, Tree Trust operates the full summer youth employment program and is funded through the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). In the summer, youth have the opportunity to work on a landscape crew, at an individual site or at an enclave site (with a job coach).

In Scott County, Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds are combined to serve local youth. The youth programs tie into the year-round work experience curriculum in the community schools.

Both Scott County and Tree Trust operate a WIA Youth program for young people at traditional and alternative schools in the county. They provide individual assistance to youth, helping them to grow in independence and leadership development. They also work with youth on career exploration, educational support and life skills.

Impact of ARRA Funds

The ARRA funds were very beneficial to youth in Dakota-Scott WSA. The funds allowed Dakota-Scott WSA to increase the number youth served (249 additional youth served), expand services to youth between the ages of 21-24, increase the variety of work experience opportunities and develop new collaborations with other youth serving agencies.

Work Experience

Scott County offered summer academic work experience at St Francis Medical Center, Tree Trust, Murphy's Landing and Youthbuild. At Murphy's Landing living history museum, youth help the staff with the maintenance and landscaping which allows the public to visit and learn about the history and culture of their local area. Participants experience life in the Scott County area during the early 1800 – 1850's. Academic credit is available.

Through Youthbuild, young people study careers in the trades and construction-related professions. Several youth expressed interest in pursuing a career in that field even after grueling hours working in bad weather. Academic credit is available. Scott County also served youth in transition/extended year programs and scattered sites throughout the county.

Tree Trust served youth in landscape crew positions at 6 different sites in Dakota County. Youth built staircases and retaining walls; planted trees, maintained trails; installed picnic table paver pads; painted a hockey rink; and made Dakota County's city parks, regional parks, nature centers, and public spaces more accessible, safe, and fun. Landscape Crew members earn elective school credit while learning valuable employment-readiness skills, putting math and writing skills into a work context, and developing a connection to their community.

Dakota- Scott Workforce Services

Contact Information

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Area Served

Dakota and Scott Counties

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Dakota County

Youth Served 162
Basic Skills Deficient Youth..... 85%
Youth on Public Assistance 36%
Youth With a Disability..... 91%

Scott County

Youth Served 46
Basic Skills Deficient Youth..... 52%
Youth on Public Assistance 13%
Youth With a Disability..... 61%

Nicole

Sixteen-year-old Nicole, active in school and sports, lives in rural Scott County and knows the reality of needing a job:

“Prior to going into the summer youth program I was in need of money. My dad had knee surgery. He is my only parent and source of income, and with him being unable to work the last couple of years we get very little money. I was in need of money for small things like gas, shampoo/conditioners/make up, school clothes and supplies, and just extra spending money. I did send out many job applications to the stores around town, but none of them replied. The only job experience I had before this summer was babysitting. In the last year or so there have been a lot of problems with the economy and no one was really hiring.

My dad was the one who told me about the program. I got a job at Schoenbauer’s Country Corral, working with horses and about four other people from the program. Before I went to work for the Schoenbauer’s, I was actually quite afraid of horses and did not know a single thing about them. I learned how to saddle them, ride them correctly, guide them through trails and courses, horse care and grooming, and other little things about them. I also learned how to take care of other animals around the farm through daily chores. I worked with children, adults, and people with mental and physical disabilities which I had never done before. A big part of the job was Special Olympics which were every Thursday. It definitely taught me better people skills and gave me more confidence in my abilities throughout the summer. The program helped me get work experience and knowledge that I need to find a job on my own.

I am currently in 11th grade. Future educational plans include finishing high school and going to college. This program has given me many skills I can use in the work force. The two big ones would probably be having the ability to handle different people and also having general confidence in my working ability and in myself. Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”

Forty-seven youth were placed at 24 individual sites and 96 youth were placed at 19 different enclave sites. Youth developed working relationships, explored career paths, and improved their work skills while providing hours of valuable service as office assistants, childcare assistants, landscapers, maintenance workers, and program assistants to community-serving organizations. Academic credit is offered.

Dakota County also offered unique job opportunities through the use of ARRA funds at Dakota County Libraries, ProAct, Inc (manufacturing), Dakota County Community Development Authority (maintenance), and Inver Hills Community College (various work experiences and an opportunity to become familiar with the post secondary culture).

Career Exploration

The Minnesota WorkForce Centers in West Saint Paul, Burnsville and Shakopee each have a youth-friendly Zone. This corner of the Resource Room offers special job postings, books, community notices and other print resources as well as two dedicated computers specifically targeted to the young job seeker. The companion web site <http://www.mnwfc.org/dakota/zone/index.htm> received almost 70,000 visits since its launch in late 2003, with an average of about 970 hits each month. Along with links to every imaginable career exploration resource, the site offers career exploration and work search content that young people can use to guide them through this process. The philosophy behind the Zone is that youth can and should own their own future, that exploring careers and furthering educational goals is a process that young people can begin independent of teachers, counselors or parents. Often, staff brings the Zone to users in the area: schools, the correctional facility and other youth serving organizations. Eligible youth who require greater assistance are welcomed into the WIA Youth program; many have self-referred.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

Dakota County staff reached out to Community Corrections, providing advice on their plans to bring career exploration and employability content to their program. Staff provided continuing contacts with private sector businesses and other material that will prepare adjudicated youth for the future.

Dakota County Libraries promote The Zone as part of their outreach to and programming for Young Adult readers/patrons. Workforce Services collaborates with Library staff to bring library resources more directly to program participants. Additionally, Dakota County Libraries sponsored six workshops in Spring 2009, titled “How to Land a Summer Job.” This was the most attended workshop in the history of the libraries with a total attendance of more than 100.

The “Get Jobs” Job Fair in Eagan, had a special Youth Booth where young people could take a brief interest assessment, learn about The Zone and other Youth Services, practice interacting with employers and get career/work search advice. A “Tip Sheet” advising young people on strategies for getting the most out of a job fair was provided

to schools, posted on the Zone web site and distributed through other community partners.

Scott County staff represented the WorkForce Center System at a Youth Job Fair at Prior Lake High School. More than 100 young people visited the booth, tested their work-search knowledge, won prizes and learned how to market themselves to potential employers.

Scott County staff participated in the Reality Store Program, a simulation where youth practice banking and budgeting skills, and see immediate consequences of financial decisions. This year, more than 100 youth participated. The Reality Store was purchased with the use of incentive funds. It will be conducted at area schools and will become an integral part of summer youth activities.

A large (and growing) contact list has been used to feed information to a variety of educators, social service providers, and community program practitioners of opportunities available through the WorkForce Centers and partners that target youth. In this way, an ever-widening web of youth advocates is connected by The Zone.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

Staff relies heavily on cooperation with local businesses to serve as host sites for the work experience. In 2009, youth were placed in seven of the top fifteen "Occupations in Demand" identified by DEED. Jobs were created at health care facilities to expose youth to nursing – the job in highest demand. Youth in medical settings – such as Children's Dental Services, St Francis Medical Center and Park Nicollet Health Services – interacted with health care professionals, learned medical terminology and how to chart and record data, and provided direct customer service to a diverse group of patients and their families. Jobs were also created in retail, food preparation, and service work.

The Youth Council presents an annual Dakota Electric Award for Excellence in Youth Employment Services. This award honors a program, individual or employer who has demonstrated commitment and effectiveness in preparing young people for the world of work.

Other Funds Leveraged

Thanks to the availability of MYP funds, the WSA can reach out to more youth and involve the wider community in serving youth. Many additional dollars are leveraged into the youth program through MYP.

In Dakota County, municipalities or school districts contribute materials for the worksite. This comes to more than \$3,000 for each crew site operating each year. Scattered worksites provide in-kind contributions of supervision and mentoring of youth participants. The summer employment programs could not operate as effectively without MYP and leveraged funding. Because of the value of the program, community partners are glad to contribute to the effort.

Levi

Levi has spent four summers working with Tree Trust. He and his fellow crew members



have built a modular block retaining wall at Orchard Lake Park in Lakeville, a modular block planter around the park sign and a modular block staircase at Alimagnet Park in Apple Valley, and a modular block edger surrounding the playground at Greenridge Park in Lakeville.

Levi knows how to lay modular block, and he knows how important his projects are to the community. "I am very proud of the work my crew is doing at [Greenridge Park]," said Levi in a letter he wrote to the Lakeville Community as part of the Team Tech curriculum he completed for high school credit. He described the benefits of this year's project, saying "[the modular blocks] will stay for a longer time than the timber."

"Levi is the strongest and hardest worker on the crew," said his crew leader, Pete, when he recommended Levi for a raise. At the beginning of the summer, Levi's skill at laying modular blocks put him far above his fellow crew members, and Pete had to remind him: "I know it can be frustrating, but try to work with other people on blocks."

But by the end of the summer, Pete noticed that Levi had "gotten more patient with other workers" and described him as "a good leader." Levi's consistently excellent work ethic and his improvement in teamwork earned him a Certificate of Recognition signed by Governor Tim Pawlenty. Pete summed up his nomination of Levi for the award by saying, "Works tirelessly, does not complain."

Levi will return to Farmington High School in the fall as a junior, with a savings account full of the money he earned working hard all summer and the proud feeling of another project well done.

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

Contact Information

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Area Served

Ramsey County

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	188
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	44%
Youth on Public Assistance	41%
High School Dropouts	44%

Mission

To strengthen the economic success of the community through personalized and effective workforce development.

Program Summary

YouthLEAD is Workforce Solution’s youth employment and training program, funded through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) and the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). YouthLEAD assists low-income, at-risk youth in addressing barriers to attaining a diploma or certificate and pursuing additional education and employment that leads to self-sufficiency.

YouthLEAD services that are offered year-round include:

- Supportive Services
- Development of Career Goals
- Exploration of Post Secondary Options
- Mentors
- Assistance in Obtaining a Diploma and/or Certificate
- Basic Skills Assistance
- Occupational Skills Training
- Leadership Development Opportunities
- Positive Work Experience

Workforce Solutions contracts with the following community based organizations: HIRED, Guadalupe Alternative Programs (GAP), Hmong American Partnership (HAP), Employment Action Center (EAC), YWCA of St. Paul, and LifeTrack Resources.

The third annual YouthLEAD Recognition Event was held this summer at Harriet Island. Over 65 participants were recognized for attaining high school diplomas, GED’s, Post Secondary certificates and employment. A total of 200 youth, parents, staff and dignitaries participated in the event. University of Minnesota men’s basketball coach Tubby Smith gave an inspirational speech to all of the recipients.

Impact of ARRA Funds

With the ARRA funding in 2009, YouthLEAD served an additional 800 youth, including 444 youth in summer youth employment from June 1 to September 30. Workforce Solutions, along with its summer providers (YWCA of St. Paul, Guadalupe Alternative Program (GAP), Tree Trust, Northwest Youth and Family Services and the City of St. Paul Youth Job Corps), employed youth ages 14-24 in various jobs including landscaping, clerical, food service, maintenance, construction, child care assistance and emergency medical services. Older youth, ages 22-24, built park benches, mended fences and became Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) through a customized training program offered by Inver Hills Community College. Each youth that participated in the summer program received work readiness training that included work behavior and soft skills, resume writing, application completion, career awareness, budgeting and life skills.

Work Experience

In the Summer of 2009, twenty-five ARRA-funded youth, ages 18-24, began a customized twelve-week Emergency Medical Services Technician Program offered by Inver Hills Community College. The premise behind the training was to give youth of color the opportunity to become EMTs within their communities along with the exposure that could lead to career opportunities as Firefighters, Paramedics, Police Officers, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Registered Nurses. The ARRA funding provided work readiness training and a paid work experience for all of the youth who participated. Tuition was paid for by grant funds acquired by the City of St. Paul Human Rights Department from various foundations. Other partners in the project included City of St. Paul Human Resources and Parks and Recreation, City of St. Paul Fire Department, Regions Hospital, City of St. Paul Council members, Unions, Allina Medical Transport, NAACP of St. Paul and Workforce Solutions. At the end of the twelve weeks, ten students passed the certification tests to become EMTs.

Career Exploration

Youth are provided information on strategic industries and occupations identified as in-demand by the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and utilize this information in identifying a career plan. Workforce Solutions ensures a definite connection between work, academic learning and career-building. Each participant has the opportunity to consider the connection between school and work. Career counselors help youth select work-based learning opportunities in a chosen career field or industry. The placements integrate work experience with participant's career development plan.

YouthLEAD participants have access to a "Youth Job Club" located in the St. Paul WorkForce Center, Monday through Friday from 12:30 to 4:30p.m. Participants engage in job search activities, creating and updating resumes, completing on-line applications and working on school assignments. Other activities include career exploration, visiting iSEEK and O*Net web sites, researching colleges and universities, completing financial aid applications and developing positive networking with other youth participants. A quarterly youth-focused newsletter called "Youth Under Construction" is published and written for and by youth.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

Workforce Solutions and the Youth Council, with support from the Ramsey County Commissioners, St. Paul City Council, Workforce Investment Board, Ramsey County Community Corrections and the Ramsey County Corrections Advisory Board, obtained funding from the State Legislature for Building Lives. With this funding and the addition of an ARRA Special grant, Workforce Solutions and its contractor HIRED have provided two career/job counselors at the Ramsey County Boys Totem Town (BTT) facility. These additional staff will assist 100 adjudicated youth in transitioning from BTT back to their local high schools and communities. Assistance in providing work

Victoria

Victoria is an exceptional seventeen-year-old YouthLEAD participant. Victoria is currently a senior Honor Roll student attending Como High School where she is involved in Choir, National Honor Society, and Multi-Cultural Excellence Program. She is currently a volunteer at Feline Rescue Shelter and Regions Hospital. Victoria successfully completed her summer work experience at Turn-Style Consignment located in Roseville, MN. Her supervisor/store manager was so pleased with Victoria's work performance and positive attitude that she was offered a permanent position with the company. Her supervisor also expressed satisfaction in collaborating with Workforce Solutions to provide work experience and prepare youth for employment in today's dynamic society.

Victoria has bloomed into a confident and empowered young woman. Both Victoria and her mother are also excited about her growing awareness of life's abundant opportunities. Victoria is also pleased to contribute to the family finances. Her mother is elated with her accomplishment and the services that YouthLEAD has provided. Victoria plans to attend University of St. Thomas with a major in Veterinary Science.



Minnesota Dept. of Employment and Economic Development
experiences and mentoring activities are the prime activities of this project.

The Outreach to Schools Project operated by Workforce Solutions in partnership with Johnson High School, Como Park High School and GAP is a prime example of a shared youth vision. Over 500 youth receive career assistance for college.

Focus on Business Needs

YouthLEAD focused on business and private sector needs this year by offering specific training, in customer service, forklift operation, metal fabrication and basic manufacturing that gave participants the skills necessary for today's job market. Working with the customized training unit of St. Paul College, a quarterly, four day a week class in Customer Service and Retention is being provided to over 130 youth annually. At the completion of the course each student is provided a certificate that can be provided to employers.

Other Funds Leveraged

The availability of WIA and MYP funds allowed the Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board and Workforce Solutions to acquire Building Lives funding from the Minnesota State Legislature. With the partnership structure of the YouthLEAD contracts, Workforce Solutions was able to leverage community resources through its vendor partners. YouthLEAD participants were also eligible to participate in the City of St. Paul Youth Job Corps summer employment program, and GAP's YouthLEAD participants also had access to Youthbuild services.

Program Summary

The Washington County WorkForce Center provides year round employment and training services for economically disadvantaged, at-risk youth. Services include assessment, career decision making, paid work experience, individual job search consultation, job search workshops, support services, referrals to other agencies as needed and follow-up services. A service corps model of employment is offered through a contract with Tree Trust.

Impact of ARRA Funds

With the addition of ARRA funds, 66% more youth were served in Washington County in 2009 than during the previous summer. Additional community projects were completed by expanding from three crews in 2008 to five crews in 2009, and new connections were also made with employers due to the need for more scattered worksites

The ARRA funds also allowed new collaborations with area school districts. Ten youth were served by a special project with Independent School District 622. Youth participated in a 2-week work readiness and career planning workshop, an 8-week summer work experience and tours of area post-secondary institutions. School credit was available to those who successfully completed the program.

Work Experience

Subsidized work placements at non-profit and public sites provide opportunities for youth to gain experience, self-confidence, good work habits, and an understanding of workplace expectations. Youth are matched to worksites based on interests and abilities. Typical work settings include landscaping, maintenance, library shelving, office, child care and nursing home facilities.

A new partnership with Forest Lake Community Education provided five youth with work experience placements as program assistants in a teen center serving 6th – 8th graders. Youth workers were involved in planning, assisting and supervising activities. The worksite allowed them to take leadership roles and serve as role models for younger youth.

Tree Trust offers a crew-based summer work experience for youth, completing significant landscaping projects that improve the community environment and build competencies in employment skills. In 2009, Landscape Crew youth workers built a 120-person capacity amphitheater, two timber abutments and one 16-foot bridge, tent pads, and three timber staircases; removed and rebuilt archery targets and park benches; maintained trails and cleaned up public spaces; planted and mulched trees; and made Washington County’s parks and public spaces more accessible, safe, and fun.

On-site learning experiences encourage youth to appreciate the connection between what they learn at school and the skills and knowledge required on the job site, and provide opportunity for youth to earn elective school credit.

Washington County WorkForce Center

Contact Information

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Area Served

Washington County

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	49
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	61%
Youth on Public Assistance	14%
Youth With a Disability.....	92%

Amber



Amber was a high school dropout with two young children when she

enrolled in the Washington County Youth Program. Amber attended a family GED program through Forest Lake Community Education and very quickly achieved her GED and decided she wanted to pursue more education.

She worked with a youth counselor to determine a career path and decided that her long-term goal is to become a nurse; however she needed something to support her family in the short-term. She determined that becoming a CNA would be a helpful first step and enrolled in a CNA certification course through the Red Cross with tuition assistance from the Youth Program.

Once Amber completed her CNA certification, she began applying for jobs but found it difficult to obtain employment because she had little work experience. Amber began a paid work experience at a local nursing home. She was able to gain experience and new skills in a healthcare setting. The worksite was very happy with Amber's job performance. "She is a pleasure to have here. She is adaptive, willing to learn and kind-hearted" said her worksite supervisor. This experience helped Amber affirm that she had chosen the right career path.

Amber has now obtained a permanent, full-time job as a CNA. She plans to enroll in post-secondary classes in the fall to achieve her Nursing degree. According to Amber, "I would not be where I am without the help of this program. I really feel like I can achieve anything I set my mind to."

Career Exploration

The youth employment counselor assists youth in determining career pathways based on interests, abilities and job demand. Youth are educated about high growth industries, the skill sets they require and what training or education will be needed to pursue a career in the industry of their choice through tools such as Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS), ISEEK, MnCareers and written assessments. Youth are also offered the opportunity to attend career exploration and job preparation workshops.

Youth are assisted in locating training programs, completing an application and choosing courses. Financial assistance is provided for training in appropriate circumstances.

The WorkForce Center business services staff brings direct feedback and job leads to the employment counselors from county employers in targeted industries such as high tech manufacturing, banking and finance, healthcare, and transportation.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

The Washington County WorkForce Center partnered with Family Means, a community-based program, to provide work experiences for youth as mentors to younger children in the community. The teens gained leadership and work readiness skills, preparing them to transition to unsubsidized employment, and the younger children found positive role models within their own community.

The Washington County Youth Council is working to connect local businesses, community members and schools through events such as a Career Day, highlighting a variety of careers and educational opportunities. Sophomores from area high schools will be invited to learn more about areas of study available through North East Metro 916's Career and Tech Department and Century College. Guest speakers and employers provide information about how education connects to employment.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

The recent emphasis on a new class of "green collar" workers suggests that landscape services will be in demand for many years to come. Youth who work on the Landscape Crews gain hands-on, technical, and practical experience working with materials like modular blocks and timbers, techniques like leveling, and tools like block saws and masonry chisels. Should they decide to pursue a "green collar" career, their experience with Tree Trust will prove invaluable to the industry and to the specific organizations that give them a chance to further develop their skills.

Other Funds Leveraged

Tree Trust leverages funds from corporations and foundation grants as well as individual donors to serve and support more youth. Funds were leveraged from the cities of Oakdale and Cottage Grove and Washington County in order to complete projects for their parks.

Program Summary

Eligible youth in Stearns and Benton Counties receive services to enhance their career goals and to prepare for the world of work. Year-round services include assessment, career exploration, development of career learning plans including completion of high school and post-secondary school, work experience, and referrals to community based organizations. A career planner provides one-on-one assistance with career planning and goal development. Services during the summer months take place in Camp Challenge, a day camp setting. These services include assessment, career exploration focusing on targeted industries, journaling and reflection, team building, academic enrichment and employability skills training. Supportive services are available as needed. All youth services are provided in the context of Workforce “U”, a training system developed in conjunction with community businesses and workforce development partners.

Impact of ARRA Funds

ARRA funds allowed 192 eligible youth to participate in CareerONE, a sixteen day Learn While You Earn work readiness skills training program provided in the context of Workforce “U”. CareerONE provided youth the opportunity to demonstrate competency in attendance and punctuality, team work and cooperation, work quality and work quantity, and on-the-job safety. Career exploration and planning along with reality budgeting was also provided. The youth provided 5,100 work hours to eighteen local community partner agencies. Some of the work projects consisted of preparing county fair grounds for opening day, extending park trails, painting a nineteenth-century farmhouse, office assistance, cleaning and painting fire hydrants, landscaping, sewing comfort caps for patients undergoing chemotherapy, cutting and dumping bags of compost, assisting communities in setting up for the area community festival, painting, building retaining walls, laying paving and patio blocks. A second program, CareerTWO, continued similar programming for fifteen youth who had completed CareerONE, providing an additional 3,000 work hours to the community.

Work Experience

Work experience is offered to youth on an individual basis in the year-round services. The youth’s interests and career pathway drive the selection of the worksite placement and development of an Individual Skill Plan. Youth learn and demonstrate appropriate work habits on the job. The worksite supervisor assesses the youth’s skill development and establishes training goals. Upon achieving 95 percent competency of occupational skills, a “Mastery of Skills Certificate” is issued. On an individual basis, youth who participated in Camp Challenge and CareerONE may be given credit by their alternative secondary school toward their high school completion.

Career Exploration

Youth enrolled in year-round services receive one-on-one assistance exploring careers through various websites, informational interviews, tours of industries, job shadows, and exploring high-growth and in-demand occupations in targeted/strategic industries. Youth enrolled in

Stearns/ Benton Employment and Training Council

Contact Information

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Area Served

Benton and Stearns Counties

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	32
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	72%
Youth With a Disability.....	50%
Juvenile Offenders	28%

Michael is my name. As a young adult in rural Stearns County, I have not had much opportunity to obtain employment or continue my education. I graduated from an alternative high school in April, 2009. Upon the recommendation of my sister, I contacted the MN WorkForce Center in St. Cloud to find out about CareerONE.

During CareerONE, we worked in teams of 8 youth with a team leader and learned about career pathways and ourselves, reality budgeting, workplace safety and work readiness skills. I was able to earn my work readiness credential. My team worked at the Bend in the River Park in Rice where we painted a historical farm house. We also worked at the City of St. Cloud compost site and Wacosa. CareerONE was a great experience. I learned a lot and I got a nice paycheck.

After completing CareerONE, I contacted Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council to find out about returning to school. I enrolled in WIA and currently am preparing to attend the St. Cloud Technical College for an Accounting degree. I recently received my acceptance letter from the St. Cloud Technical College and will be starting school in January 2010.



Camp Challenge explore targeted industries and tour area businesses to learn about the many occupational opportunities.

An Outreach to Schools initiative places post-secondary student interns in eight area high school guidance offices or career centers to provide needed information and assistance in areas of career exploration, career planning, labor market information and strategic industries and high-growth, in-demand occupations of the workforce service area. This initiative assists students and parents in making informed career and higher education choices.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners

Coordination of community resources occurs on behalf of all year-round youth participants. One of the services utilized is the Catholic Charities SAIL/SHY program, which provides transitional living assistance for youth in the community. The Minnesota Department of Human Services Education and Training Voucher program assists former foster children with post-secondary training costs and living expenses.

Remediation strategies for youth are individualized and may include assistance through their secondary educational facility, course work offered through Workforce "U", or courses through a post-secondary facility. Camp Challenge and CareerONE deliver academic enrichment through an applied learning model. Secondary school credit may be available on an individual basis. Collaboration with the St. Cloud Technical College provided occupational training exploration opportunities in Energy Pathways for all youth in Camp Challenge, CareerONE and year-round programs.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

The regional targeted industries are the main focus of all career exploration activities with youth participants. Industry growth, demand, wages and occupational preparation and training are presented for consideration to all youth. During Camp Challenge, youth tour local targeted industries based on their interests. New Flyer Industries, St. Cloud Hospital, Nahan Printing, and Bernick's Pepsi provided Camp Challenge youth the opportunity to tour and learn about the many occupations and departments of each of these businesses. Youth participating in year-round services perform occupational informational interviews. Targeted industry employers who are members of the Workforce Investment Board are available for industry tours, informational interviews, and assistance with development of standards for Workforce "U" offerings.

Other Funds Leveraged

A generous donation from the St. Cloud Optimist Club in the amount of \$1,000 provided Camp Challenge teams with resources to spend a meaningful day focusing on positive choices, responsible decisions and self-respect. St. Cloud State University, the training provider of many Camp Challenge and CareerONE services, pared their anticipated costs in both Camp Challenge and CareerONE.

Program Summary

The Winona WorkForce Center (WFC) offers work experience opportunities to youth ages 16-21. Many youth who are in school also receive academic credit for successfully participating in work experience activities. A Green Camp was offered during the summer of 2009. Youth were transported to Lanesboro Environmental Learning Center, where they were able to participate to spend time learning more about being green, determining their carbon foot print and participating in leadership activities. The Youth Council is developing curricula for teens to "Know your Rights". Work Experience teachers have provided information and chapter outlines. The curriculum will be distributed to all Winona County High Schools.

Impact of ARRA Funds

The ARRA funds provided an opportunity to reach out to more youth overall and especially to older youth who are not normally eligible for services. The Winona WFC employed two Interns over the summer to promote, organize, develop jobs and follow up on participants. Developing jobs for older youth opened doors to new employers and different job duties over the summer and into the fall. More youth were enrolled than planned over the summer months, emphasizing service to individuals with disabilities, including those with mental health and chemical dependency, economically disadvantaged youth, teen parents, and offenders.

Work Experience

A unique worksite this year at Thern, Inc., one of the largest manufacturers of winches and cranes in the world, offered two positions: scanner of engineering prints and maintenance assistant. Thern provided adult mentors to work with two youth participants - one a high school student in a wheelchair who had motor difficulties, and an older youth with a disability interested in autobody repair.

Youth had the chance to participate in the National Work Readiness Credential (NWRC), where they could gain math, reading and communication skills for entry level jobs. Many of the high school students also earned school credit for successfully participating in work experience.

Career Exploration

Winona WFC works closely with private and non-profit employers to expand job choices. Emphasis is placed on ladder/lattice opportunities where students can grow on the job and develop additional skills.

Types of work experience sites offered in high-growth, in-demand occupations include:

- Healthcare – patient escort, resident aide, recreation therapy & dietary
- Manufacturing – warehouse work, production operations, order fulfillment, autobody
- Retail – entrepreneurial business, stocking, customer service, car detailer

Winona County Workforce Council

Contact Information

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Area Served

Winona County

Minnesota Youth Program (SFY 2009)

Youth Served	33
Basic Skills Deficient Youth.....	82%
Youth With a Disability.....	79%
Youth on Public Assistance	33%

Isiah

A senior at Winona's Area Learning Center (ALC) Isiah learned about the youth work experience program. Isiah had attendance



issues in school. His mother had been laid off and he started working with a parole officer. Isiah was placed at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore doing retail work. Isiah gained school credit for working through his Work Skills Class. He was very excited to start his new job, but didn't make day one because of a school suspension for fighting. At work, he was very respectful and showed great customer service skills. Working also gave him a reason to attend school, and his attendance improved! Unfortunately, attendance at work was not so good. He struggled to call in to work when absent. In March of 2009, Isiah decided that he wanted to find a different job with more hours. He and his case manager agreed that she would help him find a summer job if he had perfect attendance at work and school for the rest of the school year. Isiah held up his part of the deal. In June, he started working at the Winona Mall doing maintenance and landscaping work.

At the Winona Mall, Isiah is able to enjoy a wide-variety of tasks. He cleans windows, sweeps mops the floor and pulls weeds. He acquired a strong attention to detail and is proud of himself for cleaning the entire vacant building across the street from the mall. Working gives Isiah a reason to get up in the morning. He is a lot more responsible and staying out of trouble. Isiah's advice to other youth is to "do the job right, and get things done right away." Isiah hopes to continue working at the Winona Mall doing maintenance work when school starts. He is ready to graduate next spring, so that he can go on to college for drafting or architecture.

- Human Services – food shelf, residential aide
- Food Service & Janitorial – clerk, food preparer & server, custodian
- Office – clerical, bookkeeping, data entry

The Outreach to Schools project provides career information and training on WFC services to area students. Four schools participated in the project in 2008-09, with 455 youth served. Winona WFC hired two university students from a Masters in Counseling program to provide outreach activities.

Students participated in one-on-one sessions on vocational, career, and personal goal setting. The Interns assisted with individual student needs such as skill and career assessments, budgeting and financial planning, completion of application, research for vocational and career needs, and creating resumes for online use. The Interns demonstrated different creative ways of job hunting, including Minnesota Works and other online resources.

The Lewiston-Altura High School Career Fair focused on over 30 occupations in the local area. Lesson plans, a PowerPoint presentation and handouts were created on "Job Search Strategies" to help students create a resume and plan for the next ten years, including post-secondary training and employment opportunities in high-growth/high-demand career areas.

Collaboration with Other Shared Youth Vision Partners
Winona WFC offers work experience opportunities in a variety of settings. Special attention is paid to economically disadvantaged and at-risk youth living in rural Winona County – particularly the Lewiston/Altura and St. Charles school districts.

This special outreach strengthened linkages with the work experience coordinators and teachers in those areas. Efforts were made to find a number of small businesses willing to participate. This past year, 32 businesses offered work experiences. Work opportunities included stocking, grounds keeping, healthcare, retail, and clerical. On all sites, emphasis is placed on skill building and task enhancement. WFC staff participates in the classroom by holding mock interviews and application review. School staff and WFC staff lead discussions on high-growth, high-demand occupations to aid students in identifying careers.

Focus on Business Needs and Private Sector Involvement

Saint Anne's Extended Healthcare partners with the Winona WFC to offer a work experience site for youth interested in healthcare. A number of youth who are in or who have completed the work experience go on to attend Certified Nursing Assistant training.

Other Funds Leveraged

The Winona WFC has accessed Wagner-Peyser pilot funds to pay for NWRC testing.

State Fiscal Year 2009 Minnesota Youth Program Outcome Data (7/1/08 - 6/30/09)

COMBINED WSA TOTALS		TOTAL	PCT	WSA 1	WSA 2	WSA 3	WSA 4	WSA 5	WSA 6	WSA 7	WSA 8	WSA 9-H	WSA 9-C
1. Total Participants Served		2,620		74	239	174	136	236	93	155	187	389	15
Gender	2a. Male	1,425	54.4%	51	137	100	69	151	47	90	79	213	11
	2b. Female	1,195	45.6%	23	102	74	67	85	46	65	108	176	4
Age	3a. 14 - 15	967	36.9%	28	82	32	28	75	25	62	7	178	8
	3b. 16 -17	927	35.4%	39	108	91	55	120	47	74	77	104	5
	3c. 18	337	12.9%	7	25	22	22	31	9	12	76	31	1
	3d. 19 - 21	394	15.0%	0	24	29	31	10	12	7	27	76	1
Ethnicity / Race	4a. Hispanic/Latino	177	6.8%	6	11	2	4	25	10	40	16	9	3
	4b. American Indian or Alaska Native	143	5.5%	2	36	11	28	9	2	5	4	8	0
	4c. Asian	146	5.6%	0	3	1	7	4	5	1	8	32	1
	4d. Black or African American	667	25.5%	2	8	1	29	8	1	17	12	170	0
	4e. White	1,671	63.8%	70	151	159	87	219	85	135	135	193	11
Education Level	5a. 8 th grade and under	414	15.8%	24	71	1	3	43	0	18	11	20	7
	5b. 9 th Grade – 12 th Grade	1,898	72.4%	50	160	150	69	192	93	132	150	367	8
	5c. High School graduate or equivalent	126	4.8%	0	17	11	5	1	7	3	23	2	0
	5d. Post-Secondary Education	39	1.5%	0	6	12	4	0	0	2	3	0	0
Other Demographics	6. Limited English Proficient	113	4.3%	2	8	0	6	17	3	5	1	31	1
	7. Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	846	32.3%	16	28	32	107	34	15	72	19	108	1
	8. Foster Youth	233	8.9%	6	19	21	11	49	8	28	14	21	0
	9. Youth with a Disability	1,436	54.8%	60	128	72	65	159	55	97	54	297	12
	10. High School Drop-Out	287	11.0%	1	56	4	36	1	6	4	94	1	0
	11. Youth Offender	424	16.2%	9	29	21	47	76	11	24	73	30	0
	12. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	173	6.6%	1	9	9	20	8	7	10	43	5	2
	13. Basic Skills Deficient	1,684	64.3%	4	140	98	79	205	52	26	122	268	1
	14. Homeless or Runaway Youth	71	2.7%	0	3	0	16	1	11	5	10	2	0
	15. Not Employed at Program Enrollment	2,385	91.0%	74	124	158	123	213	81	148	155	389	13
PROGRAM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELATED ASSISTANCE													
1. Received Education/Job Training Activities		2,424	92.5%	74	228	174	136	236	32	155	148	389	15
2. Received Work Experience Activities		2,036	77.7%	70	226	114	65	190	56	131	93	389	15
3. Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities		1,481	56.5%	21	4	82	67	89	4	14	187	389	0
4. Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities		1,210	46.2%	74	67	100	136	194	3	137	81	0	9
5. Received Mentoring Activities		1,671	63.8%	11	84	114	24	215	43	139	178	389	0
6. Received Support Services		1,323	50.5%	6	43	43	136	56	7	14	49	389	0
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE AT EXIT													
1. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS		1,960	74.8%	70	238	158	133	147	22	155	157	358	14
2. Received Academic Credit or Service Learning Credit		1,119	42.7%	50	238	47	3	88	8	62	93	194	5
3. Drop-Out - Returned to School		128	4.9%	0	26	4	0	1	9	4	84	0	0
4. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, or Remained in School		1,569	59.9%	22	169	10	86	160	17	5	80	386	15
5. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, or Military		113	4.3%	4	25	25	1	2	2	3	7	0	0
6. Obtained a Certificate or Degree		75	2.9%	0	0	6	1	0	2	0	27	0	0
7. Entered Employment		147	5.6%	8	4	19	4	12	22	9	48	0	0
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION (AS OF SFY09)													
1. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Excellent"		663	56.1%	10	56	100	62	30	18	41	16	57	6
2. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Very Good"		330	27.9%	26	22	18	27	11	13	24	7	48	2
3. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Average"		146	12.4%	15	0	12	14	8	3	13	1	0	0
4. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Below Average"		42	3.6%	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	6	0
5. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Poor"		11	0.9%	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
6. Total Number of Surveys Completed		1,182	100.0%	43	78	130	104	52	34	78	24	112	8

State Fiscal Year 2009 Minnesota Youth Program Outcome Data (7/1/08 - 6/30/09)

COMBINED WSA TOTALS		TOTAL	PCT	WSA 10	WSA 12	WSA 14-D	WSA 14-S	WSA 15	WSA 16	WSA 17	WSA 18
1. Total Participants Served		2,620		315	97	162	46	188	49	32	33
Gender	2a. Male	1,425	54.4%	132	47	108	37	87	32	16	18
	2b. Female	1,195	45.6%	183	50	54	9	101	17	16	15
Age	3a. 14 - 15	967	36.9%	275	32	68	22	1	18	26	0
	3b. 16 -17	927	35.4%	29	34	33	24	39	18	6	24
	3c. 18	337	12.9%	4	15	17	3	49	6	0	7
	3d. 19 - 21	394	15.0%	7	16	44	2	99	7	0	2
Ethnicity / Race	4a. Hispanic/Latino	177	6.8%	16	5	7	4	14	5	0	0
	4b. American Indian or Alaska Native	143	5.5%	19	5	4	2	5	2	0	1
	4c. Asian	146	5.6%	61	1	9	2	8	1	1	1
	4d. Black or African American	667	25.5%	215	33	31	3	114	4	13	6
	4e. White	1,671	63.8%	35	67	124	41	72	42	18	27
Education Level	5a. 8 th grade and under	414	15.8%	123	30	10	16	0	10	0	27
	5b. 9 th Grade – 12 th Grade	1,898	72.4%	185	61	150	30	34	35	32	0
	5c. High School graduate or equivalent	126	4.8%	2	6	0	0	45	4	0	0
	5d. Post-Secondary Education	39	1.5%	5	0	2	1	4	0	0	0
Other Demographics	6. Limited English Proficient	113	4.3%	1	5	10	6	7	3	7	0
	7. Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	846	32.3%	216	28	58	6	78	7	10	11
	8. Foster Youth	233	8.9%	10	13	5	1	14	3	5	5
	9. Youth with a Disability	1,436	54.8%	35	61	147	28	79	45	16	26
	10. High School Drop-Out	287	11.0%	0	1	0	0	83	0	0	0
	11. Youth Offender	424	16.2%	0	9	4	2	66	4	9	10
	12. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	173	6.6%	1	12	0	0	45	0	0	1
	13. Basic Skills Deficient	1,684	64.3%	274	91	138	24	82	30	23	27
	14. Homeless or Runaway Youth	71	2.7%	1	1	1	0	19	0	1	0
	15. Not Employed at Program Enrollment	2,385	91.0%	315	90	162	40	188	47	32	33
PROGRAM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELATED ASSISTANCE											
1. Received Education/Job Training Activities		2,424	92.5%	315	54	162	4	188	49	32	33
2. Received Work Experience Activities		2,036	77.7%	298	84	162	30	31	49	0	33
3. Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities		1,481	56.5%	298	0	162	11	71	49	32	1
4. Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities		1,210	46.2%	298	1	0	2	66	5	32	5
5. Received Mentoring Activities		1,671	63.8%	181	80	162	0	1	49	0	1
6. Received Support Services		1,323	50.5%	298	20	162	11	85	1	0	3
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE AT EXIT											
1. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS		1,960	74.8%	298	44	44	30	23	41	17	11
2. Received Academic Credit or Service Learning Credit		1,119	42.7%	171	0	70	14	26	41	0	9
3. Drop-Out - Returned to School		128	4.9%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, or Remained in School		1,569	59.9%	315	28	160	5	23	45	32	11
5. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, or Military		113	4.3%	0	2	2	1	36	2	0	1
6. Obtained a Certificate or Degree		75	2.9%	0	0	0	0	37	2	0	0
7. Entered Employment		147	5.6%	0	8	0	6	5	0	0	2
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION (AS OF SFY09)											
1. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Excellent"		663	56.1%	127	7	32	0	41	11	29	20
2. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Very Good"		330	27.9%	82	6	20	10	3	7	0	4
3. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Average"		146	12.4%	72	1	0	1	4	0	1	1
4. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Below Average"		42	3.6%	25	0	4	0	0	1	1	0
5. Number of Participants Rating MYP Experience as "Poor"		11	0.9%	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Total Number of Surveys Completed		1,182	100.0%	315	14	56	11	48	19	31	25

Workforce Investment Act Youth Formula Grant - Annual Program Summary

What is the purpose of the WIA Youth Formula Grant Program?

The Workforce Investment Act Youth Formula Grant Program provides year-round employment and training services to economically disadvantaged youth between the ages of 14 and 21.

How many Minnesota youth participants are served through the WIA Youth Formula Grant Program?

In PY 2008 (7/1/2008 to 06/30/2009), 4,417 youth participants received services provided under the WIA Youth Formula Grant through the 16 Workforce Service Areas and their respective local service providers.

What types of services are available to eligible youth through WIA?

Local Workforce Investment Boards and Youth Councils make the following ten required youth program elements available:

- Paid and unpaid work experiences, internships
- Adult mentoring
- Leadership development
- Occupational skills training
- Alternative secondary school services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Support services
- Summer employment opportunities
- Tutoring, study skills training/dropout prevention
- Follow-up services

What were the funding levels for Program Year 2008?

The program received \$9.3 million in PY 2008.

What are the ages of youth served in PY 2008?

- Ages 14 to 15: 20 percent
- Ages 16 to 17: 40 percent
- Ages 18: 15 percent
- Ages 19 to 21: 25 percent

What are the characteristics of youth served in PY 2008?

- Basic Skills Deficient: 66 percent
- Youth With a Disability: 44 percent
- Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance: 41 percent
- Youth Offender: 14 percent
- Pregnant or Parenting Teen: 13 percent
- Foster Youth: 7 percent
- Recovering Chemically Dependent Youth: 5 percent
- Homeless and/or Runaway Youth: 6 percent

What is the statutory authority for WIA?

Services and policies are under the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-220); U.S. Code, Title 29, Chapter 30.

Where can I find more information on WIA Youth Programs?

To locate a Youth Employment Provider in Minnesota see:

<http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/>

WIA Youth Performance Measures – Report Period is Program Year (PY), July 1 – June 30

Performance Measures	PY 2006		PY 2007		PY 2008	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
Number Served	4,495		4,126		4,417	
Younger Youth Skill Attainment	89%	91.6%	89%	93.6%	90%	93.3%
Younger Youth Diploma/Equivalent Attainment	72%	81.3%	75%	84.6%	76%	85.6%
Younger Youth Placement & Retention	74%	74.1%	70%	73.6%	73%	79.4%
Older Youth Placement	71%	80.1%	76%	82.1%	79%	82.6%
Older Youth Retention	83%	84.1%	82%	84.4%	83%	89.2%
Older Youth Wage Gain	\$3,500	\$3,803	\$3,500	\$4,714	\$3,800	\$5,626
Older Youth Credential	52%	59.4%	53%	56.4%	55%	61.8%

Prepared by:
The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Office of Youth Development

www.positivelyminnesota.com