

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT – OFFICE OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

# 2008-2009 Outreach to Schools Annual Report

Service Provider Profiles

January 2010

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## INTRODUCTION

Minnesota's Outreach to Schools (OTS) Project was funded by \$130,000 of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) statewide discretionary funds, with an equal amount of cash or in-kind match required.

College interns are trained to assist youth and families in traditional and alternative schools with career exploration and provide career counseling, college information and current labor market information. The interns complement the work of the existing school counselors and earn academic credit and/or a wage or stipend for their work. The project addresses a major unmet need: new ways of delivering career and labor market information to the neediest youth and families.

Core partners in the project include the Workforce Service Areas (WSAs), Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs), local Youth Councils, WorkForce Centers, higher education, and local educational agencies. Some local areas have also included community-based organizations such as Community Action Agencies and organizations such as juvenile corrections to reach the neediest youth and families.

OTS is an activity in support of Minnesota's Shared Vision for Youth and provides services such as:

- Group career planning sessions, career coaching, career classes, instruction on job search skills, interviewing skills and assistance in developing a resume
- Information on career exploration tools such as [Minnesota Careers](#), [MinnesotaWorks.net](#), [O\\*Net](#), [MCIS](#), [I-SEEK](#)
- Information for high school seniors regarding post-secondary education options, campus visits, narrowing choices of schools and advice on completing applications and finding and applying for financial aid
- Mock interviews with business panels, job shadowing opportunities, and business tours
- Information on the services available through the WorkForce Center System

Outcomes at a Glance	
Number of Youth Served:	12,561
Number of Parents Served:	1,237
Grades of Youth Served:	
Pre-High School:	5%
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	12%
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	17%
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	32%
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	29%
Post-High School:	4%
Number of Interns Hired:	29
Number of Schools/Community Agencies Served:	141

### State Contacts:

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## LOCAL AREA PROFILES

### **Northwest Private Industry Council, Crookston**

Rodger Coauette, [rodger.coauette@state.mn.us](mailto:rodger.coauette@state.mn.us)

#### School and Community Partners:

Pine to Prairie Technical Preparation Consortium; Adult Learning Centers; Badger, Climax, Crookston, East Grand Forks, Fertile/Beltrami, Fisher, Grygla, Goodridge, Kittson, Lancaster, Marshall County Central, Norman County East, Red Lake Falls, Roseau and Warroad School districts; Red River Valley Juvenile Center; local Community Action Agencies

#### Project Highlight:

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.

## Rural Minnesota CEP, Detroit Lakes

Dan Wenner, [danw@rmcep.com](mailto:danw@rmcep.com)

### School Partners:

Henning; West Central; Wadena; Bemidji; Blackduck; Brainerd Alternative Education Center (Jumpstart Class)

### Project Highlight:

The interns targeted services to youth in alternative learning school situations and provided resource information to youth who may not have the ability to obtain it elsewhere. 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 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 and help them make informed post secondary decisions.

*“School officials greatly appreciated what this added to their efforts to help young people make career decisions and learn about the world of work. The intern connected very well with the students and provided a service that both schools needed and didn't have the staff to provide. Schools are interested in having interns return in the fall.”*

*– Intern Supervisor (Rural MN CEP)*

## Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training, Virginia

Michelle Ufford, [Michelle.Ufford@state.mn.us](mailto:Michelle.Ufford@state.mn.us)

### School Partners:

Aitkin High School; Albrook High School; Babbitt-Embarrass High School; Barnum High School; Bigfork High School; Carlton High School; Cherry High School; Chisholm High School; Cloquet Senior High School; Cook High School; Cook County High School; Cotton High School; Cromwell Wright School; Deer River High School; Ely High School; Esko High School; Eveleth-Gilbert High School; Floodwood High School; Grand Rapids Senior High School; Greenway High School; Hermantown High School; Hibbing High School; Hill City High School; Indus High School; International Falls High School; Littlefork-Big Falls High School; McGregor High School; Mesabi East High School; Moose Lake High School; Mt. Iron-Buhl High School; Northome High School; Nashwauk-Keewatin High School; Orr High School; Proctor High School; Silver Bay High School; Tower-Soudan High School; Two Harbors High School; Virginia High School; Wrenshall High School; Nett Lake School; Northern Lights School; Chief Bugonaygeshig School; Borderland Alternative Learning Center; Cloquet Alternative Learning Center; Grand Rapids Alternative Learning Center; Northland Learning Center

### Project Highlight:

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training has implemented a comprehensive partnering project with the local educational agencies in Northeastern Minnesota. This year-round partnership has provided assistance to 45 schools, including Independent School Districts, Charter and Tribal Schools, Alternative Learning Centers, and other youth with career exploration, career assessments, labor market information, financial aid and other employment opportunities available through the local WorkForce Centers.

Students and parents benefit from Outreach to Schools because they receive valuable information about career opportunities in the region through a discussion about current employment trends and what the "experts" feel will be high demand/ high pay jobs in the region. Data supports the fact that most of the students in the region want to work and remain in the area, so it's important for them to know what careers will be available. The assessments guide students/parents toward a career that suits their interests, personality and skills. Office of Job Training staff discuss how to apply and pay for college/training because that is a big concern for the youth and families.

The Office of Job Training has developed positive relationships with school staff, providing an opportunity to meet and work with a diverse group of youth. Services have been offered to both mainstream students and those in Special Education classes. This year the agency received an increase in youth referrals from teachers, counselors and other school staff. Through the Outreach to Schools project, it is hoped that more and more educational agency staff will see the benefits of this joint cooperation and collaboration because it is a win-win situation for all agencies involved.

## Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS), Monticello

Barbara Chaffee, [bchaffee@cmjts.org](mailto:bchaffee@cmjts.org)

### School and Community Partners:

Crossroads Learning Center (Sandstone); Pine City Area Learning Center; East Central High School (Sandstone); Windows Victims Services and Therapeutic Services Agencies; CMJTS Youth Leadership Group; Mora WorkForce Center Job Club; Pine County Human Services; Willmar Public Schools (High School, Bridgeway, Focus House, Area Learning Center, Junior High School); New London Spicer High School; Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City High School.

### Project Highlight:

Two interns worked in local high schools, alternative schools, and area WorkForce Centers, providing 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.

*"I did a lot of hands on work with the youth to find out what they were interested in so that I could focus exclusively on individual interests. I planned college tours for the youth so that they could get an interactive experience that would enlighten their perspective on the college experience... The students that were the most at risk for not succeeding were the ones who suggested the colleges that we contacted. I kept it very student oriented and student focused. The students were in small groups for the college visits so they were able to ask more personal questions regarding their own futures as far as college. Some of the students were able to meet with counselors and make specific plans for enrollment and tuition.*

*I also set up one-on-one job interviews between students and professionals in the field of their choice. One student interested in social work was able to interview with a child protection worker. I found that singling out the students and giving them individual time with the professionals was very effective. They were able to ask very specific questions without being shy or embarrassed. It also gave the students a very clear idea of how to achieve their goals and what the job outlook for our area would be from an inside perspective."*

*– Intern (CMTJS)*

**Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Marshall**

Juanita Lauritsen, [JLauritsen@swmpic.org](mailto:JLauritsen@swmpic.org)

**School Partners:**

Windom Area Learning Center Red Rock Ridge; Redwood Valley Area Learning Center; Marshall East Campus Area Alternative Learning Center; Minnesota River Valley Education Alternative Learning Center; Upward Bound; TRIO Program; Southwest Minnesota State University; Marshall Public School; Yellow Medicine East High School

**Project Highlight:**

The Outreach to Schools project was previously offered to alternative schools in the service area and has now 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. Youth are exposed to the Southwest Minnesota Careers website ([www.southwestminnesotacareers.com](http://www.southwestminnesotacareers.com)) to identify high-growth industries and in-demand occupations. A scavenger hunt was developed for the website and used with the students as a way of helping them become more familiar with the site.

## South Central Workforce Council, Mankato

Diane Halvorson, [diane@mnvac.org](mailto:diane@mnvac.org)

### School Partners:

Cleveland Public School; LeCenter Public School; LeSueur-Henderson Public School; Montgomery-Lonsdale Public School; Nicollet Public School; St. Clair Public School; St. Peter Public School; River Bend Alternative Learning Center

### Project Highlight:

The interns are first-year graduate students in the Student Counseling Program at Minnesota State University-Mankato. Prior to working with the students at area high schools, the interns received training from the Mankato WorkForce Center staff, Minnesota State University-Mankato, South Central College, and the local labor market analyst who provided them with information on the labor market including high growth/demand occupations in the region. The training includes tours with local businesses so that interns have hands on exposure to demand occupations.

The interns are placed at local school districts to provide career exploration and career counseling assistance through one-on-one advising and classroom presentations. The interns meet with every high school junior and senior, enabling them to reach students that are not proactive about their plans after high school and would otherwise go unnoticed and fall through the cracks. The interns also provide career exploration activities for younger grade levels so that they can begin to consider their plans after high school.

*“There is so much I want to do, but with the amount of work I have every day, meeting with all of the students individually isn’t possible. The intern accomplished this and made a huge impact on the school and the students.”*

*– Counselor at Montgomery-Lonsdale High School*

*“This grant gave me the opportunity to get out in the community and help high school students with their career planning. This gave me the chance to get my feet wet in the schools, seeing how, for whom, and why they operate. This was a great test to see if School Counseling is really the field for me, which it definitely is. I would like to thank the Workforce Council for giving me this great prospect.”*

*– Intern at LeCenter and Nicollet High Schools*

**Southeast Minnesota Workforce Development, Inc., Rochester**

Randy Johnson, [rjohnson@wfdi.ws](mailto:rjohnson@wfdi.ws)

School Partners:

Alden High School; Glenville High School; Mable-Canton High School; Century High School (Rochester); John Marshall High School (Rochester); Owatonna Alternative School; Hayfield High School; Byron High School and Alternative School; Wabasha High School

Project Highlight:

The Outreach to Schools project helps youth learn about other projects operated by Workforce Development, Inc., so that they may access these other opportunities as appropriate. These projects include: Reality Bites (focusing on youth aging out of foster care); Re-Entry Project in Rochester for youth coming out of incarceration; and Manufacturing Academies held at Red Wing Correctional Facility.

Youth in the local area learned about summer employment program opportunities from the interns visiting their schools and through the Career Connect newsletter that was created as part of the Outreach to Schools Project.

## **Hennepin County Training and Employment Assistance, Minneapolis**

John McLaughlin, [john.mclaughlin@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:john.mclaughlin@co.hennepin.mn.us)

### School and Community Partners:

Brooklyn Center Area Learning Center (ALC); Second Harvest Heartland

### Project Highlight:

The intern met individually with youth at the school, creating a plan with each student pertaining to short and long-term goals. The intern assisted the youth with interviewing skills and finding information from resources such as iSEEK and the WorkForce Center to help the youth in achieving their goals. The youth served through the project had many barriers to being successful in school and employed, including chronic truancy, court involvement, and teen parenthood.

The intern also created posters and a bulletin board in the school lunchroom with current information about jobs and volunteer opportunities which was available to all youth in the school. A room at the ALC was equipped with computers to allow the students to practice typing skills, work on building a resume, search for employment, and get assistance with classroom assignments.

Service learning was a component of the Hennepin County project, and the intern accompanied the students to Second Harvest Heartland for community service activities.

## Minneapolis Employment and Training Program, Minneapolis

Deb Bahr-Helgen, [deb.bahr.helgen@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:deb.bahr.helgen@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)

### School Partners:

Four Directions Charter School; Plymouth Youth Center Alternative School; The City Inc. (North and South campuses); Long Tieng Academy; Minneapolis Public Schools; AchieveMpls

### Project Highlight:

The five high schools receiving primary services were selected based on student demographics and high school staff who expressed that students received limited or no career and/or employment resources. All five schools are located in high poverty areas of Minneapolis. Many of the students served through the project have multiple barriers to achieving self-sufficiency.

Career Exploration classes were taught at the Zone in the South Minneapolis WorkForce Center for 28 young adults with disabilities from Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) Transition Plus. The intern assisted Vocational Rehabilitation and MPS Special Education staff in providing students with an array of current information and resources including: identifying and researching high demand careers; non-traditional employment, emerging careers, and connecting youth to businesses that are committed to hiring a diverse workforce.

*“Four Directions Charter School serves predominately American Indian high school students in North Minneapolis. 95% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Many of our students are highly mobile, and are at risk of dropping out of school, and most are behind in progress towards graduation. Fortunately, they do have access to some American Indian employment training programs, but most of our students do not pursue this option. The Outreach to Schools intern has had an important impact on these patterns, and a wonderful source of individual support for our students. This year, our student intern met with at least 25% of our population to support them in employment readiness, resume writing, job application process...Prior to the Outreach to Schools intern position, such services were more sporadic in our school.”*

*– Social Worker at Four Directions Charter School.*

## Anoka County Job Training Center, Blaine

Jerry Vitzthum, [jerry.vitzthum@co.anoka.mn.us](mailto:jerry.vitzthum@co.anoka.mn.us)

### School Partners:

Anoka Hennepin District #11 Alternative Programs at Compass and Crossroads; Fridley Alternative School

### Project Highlight:

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.

Each intern attended the WorkForce Center Career Exploration Workshop, which provided them with the foundational tools for career exploration including the Department of Employment and Economic Development's web site and how to access the various labor market reports. The interns learned to utilize the Occupations in Demand data tool and share information about the occupations in demand with students. The interns also were trained in the WorkForce Center Resource Room which exposed them to additional printed materials and on-line tools that could be utilized for career exploration. The interns learned about the value of career laddering and how to assist youth in identifying their transferrable skills and developing short term goals. The interns were instrumental in assisting youth with developing resumes and job search techniques geared toward securing employment in the private sector.

*"This opportunity has also benefited me as an intern by offering a variety of experiences in three different schools, and being trained in career and employment information. For college students interested in working with the Minnesota WorkForce Center, work experience programs or wanting to pursue careers such as a vocational or school counselor, this internship offers a very valuable experience. By working with high school students and learning how to plan and create group activities related to this information, I gained professional experience for my own career and expanded my knowledge of these topics. I also have learned about several alternative learning schools and been part of programs that are serving a diverse group of youth."*

*– Intern (Anoka County)*

*"There was one youth in particular that really stands out in my experience. This student's mom contacted me and asked that I help him get a job because her and her husband had been working with their son and had little success. It seemed while the help of the parents was an initial step in guiding the boy in the process of getting a job, someone who could talk with him that was not his parents could be helpful. I was eager to meet with him and after meeting with him over a series of appointments I was able to help him create a resume, practice interviewing, work on filling out applications and talk about some basic tips of obtaining a job. I was pleased to receive an email saying that he had gotten a job at a nearby cinema. I met with him once more once he had been working for awhile and we talked about some characteristics of a good employee. This is just one example of how the youth program helps students in the community."*

*– Intern (Anoka County)*

## Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, North St. Paul

Patricia Brady, [patricia.brady@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:patricia.brady@co.ramsey.mn.us)

### School Partners:

Como Park High School (St. Paul); Johnson High School (St. Paul); Guadalupe Alternative Programs

### Project Highlight:

Interns worked with students who had not yet applied to college, or students who were on the verge of dropping out or not graduating due to poor grades. They explored career options, post-graduation plans and assessment of personal strengths and personality with the youth. Interns helped locate employers that supported employment for those that could not easily obtain employment elsewhere.

Interns helped students navigate [www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org) to see what careers are in high demand. They also discussed alternative careers and options to college for students who did not wish to attend a post-secondary institution. They looked into trade schools and other career options in high demand that do not require a college education. In doing summer job search, interns helped students find seasonal work and understand what jobs would be hiring on a seasonal basis.

*"I received lots of positive comments from parents and teachers over the year which make this job the best I've had." - Intern (Ramsey County)*

*"Throughout the semester, I helped several students through the entire college process. Together we worked on applications, essays, filling out financial aid forms and following up with the colleges. Towards the end of the year, once college entrance wound down, I focused more attention on helping students locate summer employment. I helped students with job search tools, websites and made handouts that outlined what should be done in the job search process. I worked with each in filling out applications and worked with them on following up with employers, as well as interviewing skills and necessary knowledge in obtaining and maintaining a job. I had several students and parents approach me and thank me for my help. As a future educator this was very rewarding."*

*- Intern (Ramsey County)*

*"Thanks so very much for all that you do! You have made things much better for both me and the kids!"*  
- Teacher/Site Supervisor (Ramsey County)

*"COOL idea!!" - Teacher (Ramsey County)*

*"Thanks for doing this - I think it's a great way for students and staff to start conversations about college, etc." - School Counselor (Ramsey County)*

*"I truly believe that is a great idea. I think you should be commended on your forward thinking and fantastic implementation skills." - School Counselor (Ramsey County)*

## Stearns-Benton Employment and Training Council, St. Cloud

Kathy Zavala, [kzavala@sbetc.org](mailto:kzavala@sbetc.org)

### School Partners:

Albany High School; Apollo (St. Cloud) High School; Foley High School; Holdingford High School; Rocori High School; Sartell High School; Sauk Rapids-Rice High School; St. Cloud Technical High School; West Central ALC

### Project Highlight:

The 2008-09 Project hired ten interns from the College of St. Benedict, St. John's University, and St. Cloud State University. On average, two students interacted with the interns per hour, with overall positive feedback. The interns used their creativity to draw more students into the career centers or counselors' offices and show the students many resources of which they were unaware. Interns created presentations on writing a resume and cover letters and hosted mock interviews. One intern met weekly with a small group of students for extra assistance on filling out job applications, practicing interviewing questions, and critiquing resumes. Interns also created financial aid brochures, scheduled college visits for students, designed a counselors' newsletter, and posted local job opportunities.

*"Thank you so much for helping me set some goals in my life. Because of the job shadow that [the intern] set up for me, I was able to realize that I want to attend beauty school in Waite Park next year."*

*– Student at St. Cloud Apollo High School*

*"This internship is a valuable resource for our schools and students. To have an extra person to help out with the students makes a large difference. It would be a shame if the program was discontinued. There would be many students who would not get the help they need and deserve."*

*– Media Specialist at St. Cloud Tech*

*"I think this is a great program! Something I wish I had when I was in high school! It is a great program giving students the option of talking with an intern about their college and career goals and giving them the attention they deserve which some counselors cannot give to every student in a high school because they do not have the time."*

*– Intern at West Central ALC*

## Winona County Workforce Council, Winona

Mike Haney, [Mike.Haney@state.mn.us](mailto:Mike.Haney@state.mn.us)

### School Partners:

Winona Area Learning Center (ALC); Winona Greenhouse High School; Lewiston-Altura High School; St. Charles High School; LaCrescent High School

### Project Highlight:

The intern used interactive games and activities to reach target groups such as foster youth, youth with disabilities, court-involved youth, and youth at risk of dropping out. Students reacted positively to learning career, job search, and college information when it was presented in a fun, non-threatening way. Students learned about networking, college majors, career clusters, Holland personality types, e-resumes, work ethics, values, and interview techniques through a variety of different activities.

*“With our ALC continual progress model, students begin and complete my Work Skills classes on their own timetable. Since I have students at all different places in the curriculum, it’s very valuable for them to have another adult in the classroom to help them with their assignments and to spend some “quality time” talking about their ideas and future plans. The outreach program also really helps all of our students develop a positive connection with the WorkForce Center so that they will feel comfortable accessing their services and resources in the future.”*

*– Teacher at Winona ALC*

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