

# Cooperative Youth Services and Best Practices



A Youth Council Resource Guide

August 4, 2011

<p>This is a compilation of best practices providing a snapshot of cooperative youth service strategies underway in Minnesota's 16 Workforce Service Areas.</p> <p><b>Youth Councils</b> are multi-sector local partnerships involved in shared decision making, community education and awareness, resource mapping, youth-centered planning, program development and capacity building.</p> <p>Youth Councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assure that the youth services strategy fits into the overall vision and strategic direction for workforce development established by the LWIB.</li><li>• Assure that youth from all backgrounds can access a variety of services. Foster youth and foster parents are represented on the Youth Councils.</li><li>• Promote effective learning environments linking education and employment, leadership development, nurturing mentors and sustained support for at-risk youth.</li><li>• Offer independent-living-skills training and focus groups aimed at youth aging out of foster care and youth transitioning back to the community after being incarcerated.</li><li>• Reconnect out-of-school youth to an educational program where they earn a high school diploma and transition to a post-secondary training.</li></ul>	<p>For more information, see the WSA Contact information on each profile or:</p> <p>Kay Tracy Director, Office of Youth Development Job Seeker Services MN Department of Employment and Economic Development First National Bank Building 332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200 Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-1351</p> <p>Phone: (651) 259-7555 Fax: (651) 215-3842</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:Kay.Tracy@state.mn.us">Kay.Tracy@state.mn.us</a></p> <p>Workforce Investment Act Youth Web Page: <a href="http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/JobSeekers/Find_a_Job/Employment_for_At-Risk_Youth/Workforce_Investment_Act_Youth_Program.aspx">http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/JobSeekers/Find_a_Job/Employment_for_At-Risk_Youth/Workforce_Investment_Act_Youth_Program.aspx</a></p>
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**WSA 1 – NORTHWEST PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL**

**SERVICE AREA:** Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, and Roseau counties.

**MISSION:** *“Investing Today’s Resources in Tomorrow’s Workers”*

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **Outreach to Schools/Regional Career Information:** Over 20 school districts are partnering in this project; 750 students have received career exploration resources and current labor market information through group presentations and 150 students participated in one-on-one career exploration sessions. The supplement to the MnCareers publication entitled, "Exploring High-Demand, High-Pay Occupations in the Northwest Region of Minnesota," continues to be a valuable tool in providing current labor market information to students and parents in Northwest Minnesota. Outreach-to-Schools (OTS) activities are coordinated with school administrators and counselors, teachers and Tech. Prep. Coordinators.
- **Scrub Camps:** Through a collaborative partnership with the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) in Crookston, students in three Northwest Minnesota communities participated in day camps that provided information on a variety of high-demand medical careers. Participating high school students earned their First Aid certification and were given the opportunity to tour an Addiction Recovery Center, a Mortuary, Ambulance Services, a Nursing Facility, and local hospitals. The Hospital tours included visits to Radiology, Medical Records, Physical Therapy, an X Ray Lab, Food Services, Environmental Services, and the Emergency Room.

- **Work Crews:** The Northwest Private Industry Council has several work crews that provide additional employment opportunities for youth in the local area. The work crews typically perform public service jobs for local public agencies. Some recent jobs include interior and exterior painting in several area schools, gardening and helping with lawn maintenance for local area parks, washing vehicles for Social Services and Head Start, and cleaning ditches in several towns and cities in the local area. Working in a group environment allows the youth to learn leadership, teamwork, tolerance, and acceptance. Supervision is provided by an experienced crew leader who helps to build and promote a nurturing and supportive work environment.
- **Wadena Clean-up:** One local work crew went to the aid of a neighboring community, Wadena, after it was devastated by a tornado this summer. Calls were made to several local agencies, and within a few days a crew of youth workers made the 120 miles trip to participate in the clean-up efforts. Youth were amazed at the damage and noticed that the effects of this tornado were extremely difficult on the elderly. Comments from youth include “It was hard work but people really appreciate our help”. Another comment was “We got really dirty and sweaty and went home **very** tired.” All youth involved stated they would be willing to assist again and that they truly felt appreciated.

**WSA 2 – RURAL MINNESOTA CONCENTRATED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, INC.**

**SERVICE AREA:** 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.

**MISSION:** *“To establish a comprehensive youth development system that will assist youth to achieve economic self-sufficiency and empower them to act as solid contributors to community growth. The system will provide: effective learning environments linking education and employment; leadership development; nurturing mentors; and sustained support.”*

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **Youth Career Advisor/Outreach Program:** RMCEP partners with Beltrami and Clearwater County Health and Human Services, Bagley/Clearbrook-Gonvick, Moorhead, Bemidji, Blackduck, and the Cass Lake –Bena School Districts to expand career exploration services to students and families. Key to the success of this project was developing a close working relationship with the school guidance counselors, pre-planning and coordinating school schedules, use of computer labs. Career exploration services were provided to sophomores, juniors and seniors. Approximately 957 rural high school students received career exploration to include green economy, occupations in demand and counseling and post-secondary planning services. A Regional Career Information Website and a regional supplement to the MnCareers publication are available to support the LWIB/Youth Council's strategic initiative to provide youth and families with user-friendly career information.
- **Integration of WorkKeys/KeyTrain:** RMCEP's Youth Council has incorporated the KeyTrain pre-assessment and skill building curriculum for youth participants ages 16 and older. Areas of focus are “Reading for Information,” “Applied Mathematics,” and “Locating Information.” Participants are also able to take the tests in WorkKeys which allows them to obtain a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). This certificate is a nationally portable and recognized employability document.

- **Sector work efforts in the manufacturing, healthcare and energy industries** efforts are focused on looking at ways to incorporate career awareness at the high-school level into their industries' strategic development. These industries are identified as high-growth, in-demand sectors in the region.
- **Camp Rabideau project:** In partnership with the Cass Lake-Bena Area Learning Center (ALC), the U.S. Forest Service, the Leech Lake Indian Tribe and RMCEP, a project was developed that followed a similar principle and model used by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in which at-risk young people gained hands-on learning experience, work and education through a conservation-based service learn project throughout the Chippewa National Forest. Called Camp Rabideau, this camp is listed as a National Landmark Site and considered to be the best preserved Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) in the United States.

Examples of these activities included learning to use GPS technology to survey and record data, maintaining and developing trail systems in the forests, tree planting, community education programs, fire protection training program and rehabilitating the historic CCC site with on-site construction.

- **Youthbuild:** RMCEP works in partnership with the Perham Area ALC, Perham Public Schools, the City of Perham Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA), MnSCU and the Human Achievement Performance Academy (HAPA) to provide construction opportunities to local youth who have either left the regular school system or have chosen to attend an ALC. This project provides hands-on learning in the construction field, academic credit, career planning, life skills and OSHA 10 certification. Over the past 16 years, approximately 18 homes have been built in the Perham area for low-income families.
- **WIA Youth program:** Our focus is to provide work experiences for youth in a field of occupational interest to each participant. Towards this goal, we have developed over 800 worksites in our 19-county service area for youth. Over one half of these worksites are with the private sector.

### **WSA 3 – NORTHEAST MINNESOTA OFFICE OF JOB TRAINING**

**SERVICE AREA:** Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and Saint Louis counties, excluding City of Duluth.

**MISSION:** *“To establish an easily accessible, customer-focused youth workforce development system that will meet the needs of all workers, both youth and adult, as well as employers in today’s globally competitive, technology driven market.”*

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#### **EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **Outreach to Schools:** Individual assessments, career planning and job seeking skills are provided to potential dropouts, youth with disabilities, youth involved with the courts and corrections and youth in or aging out of foster care. The project coordinates with the various tribes and tribal community and the Native American Youth Education program. The Office of Job Training’s Outreach to Schools effort, offers 15 professional Career Counselors who provide free career guidance in 45 schools.
- **CEOs in the Classroom** connects local private sector business leaders with 8<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms using a structured model that emphasizes the importance of early career planning, including work opportunities in Northeast region of Minnesota, testimonials from the speakers about how they achieved their workplace status, and how what students do at a very early age can impact their future in the workforce. The Northeast Minnesota Youth Council is joining forces

with local Chambers of Commerce to expand the 'CEOs in the Classroom' program throughout the region. Never before has such a far-reaching partnership between the public workforce development system and the private sector occurred within the region. More importantly is the initiative's aim to impact the K12 system through the unprecedented outreach to students at such a young age. Therefore, this effort truly represents a partnership between three of the most important components of thoughtful workforce development – the public workforce development system, local employers, AND the public education system.

- **WFC in the School:** WSA staffs are available daily at the Grand Rapids Senior High School Career Center. Students stop in during their study hall for assistance with career exploration, resume development, information on post-secondary options, etc.
- **Just4U** which is offered throughout the school year at Falls High School on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Services offered include homework help, tutoring, and career counseling for students in grades 7 to 12. Referrals are provided from the high school counselor and from parents, besides walk-in students. The high school encourages the program; they see it as a real asset and are able to give it to parents as a resource available at their school. The program is in the high school library. **JUST** means: **J**ob Skills, **U** Plan Your Future, **S**tudy-Time and **T**utoring.
- **Itasca Co. Juvenile Program** WIA youth staff have developed extensive contacts with Itasca County Juvenile Probation Officers, Intensive Supervised Release juvenile agents, area foster homes, Thistledew Correctional Camp and the Wellness Court. These agencies have been able to refer and have their youth placed into the youth work experience program. The youth are able to pay fines, pay license reinstatement fees and past due child support payments from the work experience earnings. Adjudicated youth been able to obtain positive referrals and references from the worksite supervisors which has lead to some unsubsidized employment. This work opportunity has provided a positive community engagement with the youth which tends to reduce the level of recidivism for youth.

## **WSA 4 – DULUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**SERVICE AREA:** City of Duluth

**MISSION:** *“Build a skilled, diverse and adaptable workforce to meet existing labor market needs, the changing needs of our dynamic market, and stimulate economic development and growth.”*

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### **EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **Out of school youth** are connected to strategic activities through the training and skill development opportunities provided through Project SOS (School Outside of a School). This is a partnership with ISD 709 and LifeHouse, a local non-profit serving at-risk youth. Youth earn school district credit in a non-traditional setting and the project serves as an excellent referral source for WIA and/or MYP participants.
- **Credit for School and Leadership:** Youth Employment Services (YES) Duluth served college students who were eligible through the TANF summer program. These participants helped in a leadership/mentor role while receiving college internship credit. College students presented an in-depth safety orientation for all youth, using the “Youth @ Work: Teaching Teens About Safety and Health in the Workplace” curriculum. A pre-test and post-test documented the increase in safety awareness. This paid off with a decrease in the percentage of injuries on the worksites.
- **Outreach Strategies:** YES Duluth staff used social networking to stay in contact with participants. Interns helped create and update a Facebook page, website and e-mail lists. This helped both in getting information out and with follow up. Participants also

started e-mailing staff with update information. YES Duluth staff created a recruitment video which airs on public access TV and at various trade shows directed at both employers and participants. The video is also on YouTube under “YES Duluth.”

- **Community Action Duluth’s Financial Literacy Class:** YES Duluth staff partnered with Community Action Duluth to provide a financial literacy class. Topics addressed included avoiding predatory lending, investing, the meaning of a 25 cent raise, getting out of debt, dealing with collectors, interest calculations, consumerism and making spending decisions, understanding credit cards, talking about financial goals and obligations in a relationship, credit reports, making and keeping to a budget, a discussion on the ten core literacy skills, savings strategies, and setting up and maintaining bank savings and checking accounts.
- **Career Exploration:** All participants 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 is introduced to career exploration websites such as [iseek.org](http://iseek.org), [thenorthlandworks.org](http://thenorthlandworks.org), and [Minnesotaworks.net](http://Minnesotaworks.net) for information about the area’s hot jobs, information about local employers, career development resources and job search techniques. Job search and job seeking skills seminars are also offered. Subjects include application and resume preparation, interviewing skills, mock interviews, dressing for success, as well as employer expectations and what to expect as a new employee.
- **Private Sector Involvement:** YES Duluth put a special emphasis on finding private employers in the community who were willing to hire youth for the summer. Twenty-three employers provided work experience sites for over 30 disadvantaged youth. Most of the sites were developed with an individual in mind and many work experience placements led to permanent positions.
- **CEOs in the Classroom:** YES Duluth will be implementing this program for 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes in Duluth during 2011. Originally developed in Grand Rapids MN, the Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce and Duluth Public Schools will partner with YES Duluth to implement the career planning model. Implementation of this program across our region, including Northwest Wisconsin, is an action step in the Northland Prosperity Networks, a strategic plan for economic and workforce development, funded through a Regional Innovation Grant by the US Department of Labor.

## **WSA 5 – CENTRAL MINNESOTA JOBS AND TRAINING SERVICES**

**SERVICE AREA:** Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Pine, Renville, Sherburne, and Wright Counties.

**MISSION:** *“To help youth make a connection between learning and earning.”*

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### **EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **Youth Leadership Development:** CMJTS youth staff collaborate with high school staff throughout the workforce service area to form youth leadership/mentoring groups. School districts provide in-kind staff support and meeting space. Youth employment specialists tailor the leadership groups to the needs of the participants and the needs of the communities they serve.
- **Private Sector Project/Youth Employment Success (YES):** Youth participants are placed in a work experience at a business where the owner/site agrees to provide one-on-one time for mentorship and to reimburse a portion of the youth's wages. This endeavor began as a pilot project with three YES placements and a plan to serve more youth in each successive year. The original business owner collaborates with CMJTS and promotes this model through the local chamber of commerce, shares his YES experiences, and encourages other businesses to participate.
- **Leveraging Resources for Career Exploration:** Leveraged resources from multiple partners including the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation, Pathways to Employment and local educational agencies help to provide regional career camps in the manufacturing and healthcare sectors. The purpose of the camp initiative is for youth to have exposure to the college setting and to have an experiential learning opportunity in a high-pay/high-demand career field within their local communities.

- **Outreach to Schools:** College interns are recruited to work in local high schools, alternative schools, and the area WorkForce Centers to provide guidance counseling, career exploration, and post-secondary exploration services. The interns attended career clubs and events for youth and parents to help increase a family's knowledge and use of the WorkForce Center system. The overall purpose was to address a major unmet need – delivering effective career counseling and labor market information to the region's youth and families.
- **The Zone:** The Zone at the Monticello WorkForce Center began serving youth and young adults in October of 2009. A professional staff person is available to help youth assess their work skills, match their skills to a career path, and/or to identify educational goals. The Zone provides career information, internet access, free resume writing assistance, job clubs, and job-search workshops. In addition to the on-site services, The Zone staff host booths off site at local career fairs and other youth job-seeking events.

## **WSA 6 – SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL**

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

**MISSION:** *“To be the accountable champion for an effective workforce development system that is appropriately integrated with education and economic development.”*

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### **EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

#### **Best Practices**

- The Southwest Minnesota Careers WebQuest was developed by Youth Staff. This easy-to-use tool leads students through the Southwest Minnesota Careers website (developed by the local workforce investment board), teaching students how to choose a career, what type of education or training will be needed to get that job, and how much that job will pay within the region. This free tool can be utilized by individuals or used as part of a curriculum plan. Visit: [www.swmncareers.org](http://www.swmncareers.org)
- **Our Youth Programs have partnered with the Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) chapter** at Southwest Minnesota State University for a number of projects. These individuals have developed and deliver a workshop titled, “Budge-It”. This is a free option, delivered by invested college students, who also model a possible future for our youth.
- **Leadership Development trainings**, featuring positive relationship development, setting goals and developing good habits, are offered during the summer and school year. Trainings are held in the three WorkForce centers throughout our 14-county area. Training is provided through a partnership with *Simple Solutions*, based in Marshall, MN. Low-cost, professional training for our youth!
- **A new work experience site** was developed at Avera Marshall to fit the career interests of an individual youth. The position of Homemaker completes laundry, cleans rooms and takes vital statistics within a hospital. This youth was hired by Avera as a full-time employee as a result of this work experience.

**Strategies**

- Increase Awareness of Youth Employment and Partnership Opportunities
  - Coordinate “Youth Opportunity Fair” (job/resource fair) involving partners and employers.
- Communicate with Elected Officials (Federal, State and Local) Regarding the Value of Youth Services
- Guide the Coordination of Services that Fully Develop the Employment Potential of Youth
  - (Example: job skill development, cultural awareness, leadership)
- Partner with University of Minnesota Extension, SIFE and other key partners to deliver theme-focused programming.
  - (Example: diversity, fitness, etc.)
- Increase Knowledge of Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Youth
  - Partner with SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) to offer the “Let’s Get to Business” curriculum as a workshop during the school year.

## **WSA 7 – SOUTH CENTRAL WORKFORCE COUNCIL**

**SERVICE AREA:** Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan Counties.

**MISSION:** *“To Advocate and Provide for the Empowerment, Involvement, Preparation and Employment of Youth in South Central Minnesota.”*

### **YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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### **EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **Outreach to Schools/Partners in Career Exploration:** in the 2009-2010 school year 6 college interns from Minnesota State University-Mankato provided career exploration and career counseling assistance to 1,662 high school students in 8 local school districts. This initiative was expanded to nine school districts this year.
- **The Youth Intervention Program:** targets services to youth transitioning out of foster care. Youth receive career and life skills curriculum to explore and identify positive education, career and life goals.
- **Resource Mapping/Youth Directories:** the Youth Council develops youth directories of resources in the nine-county area. It includes information on child care, counseling, education, employment, health services, housing, libraries, recreation, transportation, youth organizations and youth services. The artwork on the cover of the directories is created by area youth. Visit <http://www.scswl.org/resources/youth-resource-directories/>.
- **PACER Video Internships:** provided paid internships for 7 youth from the MN Valley Education District in St. Peter to create three videos intended to educate youth with disabilities on the topics of self-advocacy, healthy hobbies and obtaining disability services in college. The videos will be posted on PACER's YouTube link at [www.youtube.com/user/pacercenter](http://www.youtube.com/user/pacercenter) in January 2011.
- **Facebook:** The Mankato Area Community Interagency Committee (CTIC) and each of the nine counties served by MN Valley Action Council (MVAC) have Facebook pages to connect youth to information on jobs and events in the area. Go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and search “Mankato Area CTIC” and “MVAC Youth Services-(Insert County Name)”. MVAC has pages for Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan Counties.

- **ISEEK Pilot Project:** The Economic Growth Collaborative of South Central Minnesota received a grant from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation to do a pilot project with ISEEK to enhance the regional South Central website to include social media to link youth to local employers. Businesses will be able to list work based learning opportunities such as job shadowing and internships. Youth will be able to connect directly with professionals in their field of interest through an “Ask the Expert” feature. These enhancements are expected to be launched in August 2011. To learn more about the Economic Growth Collaborative visit [www.egcscmn.org](http://www.egcscmn.org).
- **Work Skills Competition:** is an event organized by the Mankato Area CTIC for area youth with disabilities. Youth participate in job interviewing, application writing and problem solving activities and judged on their performance by individuals from business and organizations in the community.
- **Career Fairs:** the Greater Mankato Career Expo, Area Career Exploration (ACE) held in Fairmont and the Career Fair held in New Ulm are highly interactive educational experiences where business and community volunteers showcase career opportunities to high school sophomores.
- **Boy Scouts:** partner with MVAC to provide team building exercises, career exploration activities and field trips to local businesses for area youth.
- **Financial Fitness Training:** MVAC incorporated financial fitness as a core component of all of our youth employment and training programs. Youth are required to have a savings account at the financial institution of their choice so the pay earned from their work experience can be direct deposited into their savings account. The training focuses on money management, saving money and building assets.
- **Exposure to Demand Occupations:** Youth participate in field trips to area businesses to gain a better understanding of in-demand occupations, employers' expectations and the skills required for the occupation. Specifically, youth participated in the Tour of Manufacturing where local manufacturers opened their doors for tours and provided information on career opportunities at their business. For more information visit <http://www.greatermankato.com/gmg-tourofmanufacturinginsert.php>. The SC WorkForce Council also develops a demand occupation lists which includes the wages, education requirements and projections for demand occupations in South Central MN.
- **Framework for Workforce Development:** was developed by the SC WorkForce Council to outline operational principles and goals for services to all the populations in the worker pipeline. The Youth Council developed the following focus for youth services:
  - Support career exploration opportunities that provide youth with knowledge of demand/STEM occupations.
  - Support work experience opportunities that connect youth to local employers & teach work readiness skills.
  - Support community connections through service learning & civic engagement.
  - Support all youth achieving a high school diploma or GED.
  - Support occupational training that leads to a credential.
  - Identify service gaps for at-risk youth and leverage resources.
- **Youth Council Members:** The South Central Youth Council includes community, educational, business, labor, foster parents and youth representatives.

**WSA 8 – SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, INC.**

**SERVICE AREA:** Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, and Wabasha Counties.

**MISSION:** *“To Develop and Advance the Workforce of Southeastern Minnesota.”*

**YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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**LOCAL CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **The SE MN Workforce Investment Board** has an innovative committee structure based on industrial sectors and careers that are in demand. Contact the WSA for a copy of the strategic plan for the LWIB and the Emerging Workforce Taskforce Goals. For more information visit: [www.wdi.ws](http://www.wdi.ws)
- **Employer of Excellence Award:** WDI developed this award to showcase best practices of employers who demonstrate excellence in engaging youth in career building activities. These employers mentor other local employers in the strategies that make them so successful in engaging and retaining youth. WDI hosts a banquet each year to recognize these employers.
- **The Youth Advisory Council** encourages local private – sector employer representatives to become actively involved through a speaker’s bureau. Employer representatives are available to speak on work-related topics to youth groups and local educational entities. The goal of this project is to bring workforce relevance to educational activities.
- **Scrubs Camp:** is a career exploration activity for youth in grades 9-12. Youth are exposed to a variety of careers in the health care field during their five day stay on a college campus. For more information visit: [www.healthforceminnesota.org](http://www.healthforceminnesota.org)
- **“The Zone”** is a youth Career Resource Center and Teen Drop in Center in the lower level of the Workforce Center operated in partnership with the YMCA Link Program. Youth are made to feel welcome to drop by to address issues that they may be facing and need assistance with. The center includes computers and other resources that help

youth prepare themselves to advancement into employment or educational programs. Many times youth just need a place to be where they will not be a target for others who would take advantage of them or encourage them into activities that would be harmful to them. This center includes a clothing closet, personal care products and a limited food shelf. Youth participants have the opportunity to assist their peers in solving problems and preparing for the goals that they have set for themselves. Most youth feel that this is a very positive and motivational place to be.

- **The Academy concept** of pre-employment training offered by WDI focuses on assisting students who are interested in either entering a career or moving up the career ladder. Participants explore the opportunities that exist and receive guidance on entering their chosen field. Participants also have the opportunity to develop and practice in-demand skills specific to that field which builds confidence and prepares them for obtaining and keeping those positions.
- **Summer Readers** has been a vital part of WDI programming for 15 years in the Rochester area. This program offers at risk teens the opportunity to try out the “teacher assistant” career for part of the summer under the supervision and direction of a certified teacher. Teens help to design and prepare summer enrichment activities for elementary students struggling with reading or literacy issues.
- **Reality Bites** is an independent living skills program designed to offer practical experience to youth aging out of foster care. Topics include many of the issues that cause problems for youth as they transition into adulthood. The goal of this weekly group is to build skill and confidence as well as to offer the youth the opportunity to try out the new skill in a safe learning environment.

**WSA 9 – HENNEPIN/CARVER WORKFORCE SERVICE AREA**

**SERVICE AREA:** Carver and Hennepin Counties, (excluding City of Minneapolis)

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *“The Youth Council will be an Authority on Local Youth Employment and Career Development Issues. The Council will Lead a Coordinated Effort with Community Partners to Provide Progressive and Innovative Services That will Foster the Self-Sufficiency of All Participants.”*

**YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **WSA - Hennepin-Carver maintains a commitment** to paid summer and year-round work experience learning for MYP and WIA youth. These services can be accessed by participants in one of three components:
  - 1) **Youth Conservation Corp;** Youth work on teams of eight, with a dedicated supervisor, completing park improvement projects for local nature centers, local park districts, or other public hosts. Host sites provide all materials used to complete projects (which can run into tens of thousands of dollars of commitment), youth learn by doing; both practical application of team building, employer expectations, and landscape construction.
  - 2) **Individual Placements:** youth are assigned to local non-profits, municipal sites and other agencies to provide supplemental summer and year-round help. Youth gain valuable practical work readiness skill enhancement as well as income.
  - 3) **Job Coached Sites:** working with youth’s home school district, workers are provided school funded job coaches and transportation; enabling severely challenged youth the opportunity to gain valuable paid work experience.

- **TeamTech:** Youth working on Conservation Crews are also provided access to four computer sessions (at site) concentrating on Personal Budgeting (spreadsheet application), Resume and Cover Letter composition, and Project costing (spreadsheet application). All lessons are assembled into a summer portfolio, and awarded at a season ending Awards Ceremony.
- **HS Credit:** Working with local education partners who award elective HS credit for successful completion of Summer Program. Credit is based upon a commitment to attendance and successful supervisor evaluation; Youth are eligible to receive up to two Credits for summer participation.
- **Award Ceremony:** All Conservation Corp youth are invited to attend an Awards Picnic where each youth receives a certificate of commendation signed by local politicians and Workforce Investment Board members. Youth also receive a copy of their portfolio (TeamTech Lessons). Youth are also eligible for Governor's Award (one per crew signed by MN Governor), and awards and gift certificates for perfect attendance.
- **Young Adult Conservation Corps:** a year round corps model for older, out-of school youth. Teams participate in intensive training and public works projects, with one day per week devoted to case managed interviewing skill practice, increasing practical job skills (plant identification, construction math, team building, anger management, and resume and application completion. A 12 week term with opportunity to apply for an additional 12 weeks on advanced team.
- **Local County Commissioner Funding:** Hennepin County Commissioners have generously dedicated county funding devoted to working with foster and youth offenders placed in summer and year-round Conservation Corps.
- **Additional Outreach to Schools efforts to Brooklyn Center School District;** WSA 9 – Hennepin/Carver has contracted with BCHS in a special effort to help youth in this district. Youth are also involved in Year-Round programming and summer Conservation Corps as well as individual placement.

**Carver County collaborates** with various partners in our community for our youth employment programs. We consider the following collaboration to be our best practices:

- **Carver-Scott Educational Co-op:** operates a Youth Build Program that teaches construction skills and offers academic credit to youth based on the hours they work and the school work they complete.
- **Park Nicollet Clinics for Health Care Careers:** youth are employed at the clinic and work in several different departments. Activities include job shadowing in every department to learn that there are many more health care careers in addition to being a doctor or nurse. Youth can also earn academic credit in this program.

- **3 Rivers Park District**—youth are placed at Gale Woods farm (part of 3 Rivers Park District) as one of our scattered sites, they work on planting and harvesting vegetables and gardens and work a bit with the public giving tours.
- **District #287:** this district (combines 17 suburban school districts in the West Metro area) refers youth with disabilities and through our combined funding WIA pays the youth's wage, while the district provides job coaches for the youth at their work-sites.
- **Tree Trust:** is a local non-profit (See above) which ran 2 crews in Carver County in 2010. In addition to work readiness skills, youth are able to earn academic credit through Tree Trust programming as well.

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**WSA 10 – MINNEAPOLIS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM**

**SERVICE AREA:** City of Minneapolis

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *“To Provide Leadership to Grow Tomorrow’s Workforce.”*

**YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **Youth Council’s Focus on Results:**

***For youth:*** Have skills improved? Are more youth in jobs, in college, or military? Are they on the path to high wage jobs? Are risk taking behaviors reduced? Are all populations of youth being served? Are there ample opportunities for career exposure?

***For the system:*** Is there a network of effective service providers? Are youth programs staffed by competent, credentialed adults? Is professional training provided as needed?

- **Passport to Public Service:** city-wide job shadow events held to promote public service careers to Minneapolis high school youth.
- **STEP-UP:** In order to provide as many youth as possible with a total summer employment experience, a wide range of partners within the Minneapolis employer community, including faith-based organizations, local educational agencies, private sector business and community-based organizations, team to lead the effort of youth engagement and workforce development.
- **STEM Skills and Related Sectors (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)** is focus of the summer CLASS curriculum for STEP-UP participants - the curriculum also aligns with the WSA's targeted industries.

- **PETH (Pre-Employment Training for Healthcare Interns):** STEP-UP partners with Project for Pride in Living to offer 50 youth, who will be employed in healthcare field, pre-employment training specific to their healthcare positions. Youth who are enrolled in Roosevelt High School's Health Careers during the school year are offered summer work in area hospitals following successful completion of pre-employment training for healthcare positions.
- **Partnership With Pohlad Family Foundation:** teamed with Minneapolis WSA to provide wages and support for 12 youth to work from 12 to 31 hours per week with the HomeGrown Crew on community gardening in inner-city neighborhoods. Crew members marketed and sold their harvested produce after learning about the many benefits to healthy eating.
- **The Minneapolis Promise:** WSA 10's Mayor lead initiative to promise youth who stay in school and graduate that they'll be provided with the tools for post high school success. The Promise consists of 3 main components; college and career counseling via the AcheiveMpls Career and College Centers, summer jobs via STEP-UP and financial assistance via Power of You and the U Promise.

**WSA 12 – ANOKA COUNTY JOB TRAINING CENTER**

**SERVICE AREA:** Anoka County

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *“Preparing Today’s Youth for Tomorrow’s Workforce”*

**YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- The WSA has a collaborative partnership with the largest school district in the service area, Anoka-Hennepin District 11, which is focused on developing leadership skills. The Future Leaders Program is targeted to minority students who are either juniors or seniors. This is the second year of the collaboration and the Job Training Center covers the wages and provides vocational counseling and supports as needed for the participants.

Once selected and enrolled in the program, the students are matched with elementary schools where they tutor children who have been identified as below grade expectation or at risk of failing. The Future Leaders provide support in the areas of reading, writing and math to the young children. During the school year, the Future Leaders are also given instruction by SLA’s (Student Leader Advocates provided by the school district) in areas of learning the value of employment, how to apply for work, interviewing and working with teachers and principals at their worksites. One of the overall goals of the program is to prepare high school students for possible careers in education. One of the intended outcomes is that District 11 will recruit and hire more people of color as teachers.

- Youth that are currently in school attend a monthly class held at the WorkForce Center which is known as “Starting Block”. The intention of this activity is to allow for a group of students to connect on a monthly basis, to benefit from adult mentorship from their vocational counselor and to expose them to a range of workplace and life skills topics. 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. This activity is considered part of the work activity and worksite supervisors build their work schedule around the activity to ensure ongoing participation. In advance of the class the students receive a newsletter with pre-work assignments.

Staff and students work as work as a group to enhance their communication and leadership skills through the activities and interactions. Planning for their future is key and the facilitators focus on providing them the tools to conduct career exploration including how to explore colleges and their program offerings, connecting them to financial aid resources and possible entry into the military. Subject matter experts are invited in as guest speakers on a range of topics.

## **WSA 14 – DAKOTA-SCOTT WORKFORCE SERVICES**

**SERVICE AREA:** Dakota and Scott Counties.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *“To provide leadership and support to community partners in fostering the educational and employment success of youth.”*

### **YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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#### **Scott County:**

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### **EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **The Zone**, developed by the Dakota-Scott Youth Council and now used state-wide is the gateway to youth-friendly employment and labor market information in all three WorkForce Centers in Dakota and Scott counties. The Zone is both a physical space in the WFCs and a virtual space on the web.
- **Reality for Youth** - Approximately 120 students, who participate in special education services in Scott and Carver County high schools, attended a transition workshop called **The Reality Store** in. The Reality Store is a simulation activity in which students identified their career interests, researched a specific career and received a mock checkbook with the monthly income entered for the specific career. The high school juniors and seniors then visited booths staffed by community members. At each booth, students made decisions concerning the standard of living they would assume with their

career choice and future family in mind. There were speakers that addressed a variety of topics including insurance, housing, banking & employment & training resources.

- Recognizing Youth Achievement – Each year, Tree Trust hosts a picnic to celebrate the accomplishments of program participants who worked on landscape crews throughout the area. Dakota County. This year youth worked in various city and county parks in Hastings, Lakeville, Apple Valley and Inver Grove Heights. They built a 25 foot bridge, benches for a Frisbee disc course, a timber wall as well as completing erosion control projects and other general landscaping projects. In addition to program participants, the event was well attended by parents, local officials and Youth Council members.
- **Recognizing Youth Champions** – The *Excellence in Youth Employment Services Awards* recognize organizations or programs, an employer or an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to and effectiveness in preparing young people, ages 14-21 to enter the workforce. Dakota Electric and St. Francis Regional Medical Center sponsor and present the awards. The honorees receive their award at the WIB's Legislative and Employer Recognition Event in front of an audience of area legislators, employers and community leaders. Additionally, press releases are issued to provide additional recognition for their achievements.
- **In the Community** –
  - Dakota -Scott County staff participate in career fairs at area high schools on an on-going basis. Staff have students complete career assessment tool, and provide information on the WorkForce Center and The Zone. At one school, staff also conducted workshops on Interviewing, Job Hunting, and Hot Jobs in Minnesota.
  - Each spring, staff present "How to Land a Summer Job" workshop at local libraries.
  - Parents Resource Fair - WorkForce Center staff participated in the first annual Hastings Parent Resource Fair. The event was sponsored by the Hastings Public School Early Learning Programs.
- **Getting Credit** – In partnership with the Carver Scott Educational Cooperative, Scott County offered youth needing credits the opportunity to participate in the Health Careers, Youthbuild and The Landing collaborative projects. Work readiness skills were built into the development of each worksite. Worksite supervisors evaluated each youth's accomplishment in areas such as: interpersonal, information, systems, technology, personal qualities, basic skills and thinking skills. This year, due to transportation issues and the overall economy it was more difficult finding worksites. Those challenges were put to the parents/guardians and youth who were then encouraged to seek out positions in the local area. This simple request doubled the number of Scott County's worksites available to youth!
- **Financial Literacy training for youth participants:** Youth develop a personal budget that exhibits their gross pay, taxes and other deductions and net pay. Youth decide how much of their total earnings they would like to save and how much they would like to spend. Youth develop an understanding of the financial consequences of missing a day of work. Youth develop an estimated cost of the specific landscaping/construction project the crew is working on, with the approximate cost of materials.
- **Camps** – the Dakota-Scott Youth Council provided scholarships for youth to attend the health-care focused Scrubs Camp and Camp Enterprise an educational, weekend residency program for high school juniors and seniors. The purpose of this

program is for students to learn about team building, team work, business, and entrepreneurship.

- **Foster Care Youth** – Staff in both counties are working closer with youth aging out of the area county-based foster care programs. One of the early successes was leveraging resources from the stimulus funding to provide work experience opportunities for youth housed at the Lincoln Place a newly-opened housing development for youth transitioning out of foster care.
- **Connecting Kids to Nanotechnology** – While the Nanotechnology Summit held in Eagan was targeted to manufacturers, one of the nice surprises was the presence of a local school superintendent from one district and a teacher from another who were interested in how they could connect the information to their students.
- **Opening Doors** – The Dakota County Community Transition Committee Opening Doors Initiative is intended to foster connections between educators that work with transition aged students with disabilities, the local business community and area students that have special needs. Its mission is to promote effective transition services through community collaboration for youth that will prepare them for adult life. A few highlights of the program, which is being led by the area’s Vocational Rehabilitation Services, include:
  - Labor market information to be distributed to educators in the local schools to help them to be better informed of the prevalence of jobs in the region and of high-growth high-demand jobs in our local economy;
  - The development of an e-mentoring project to match students with local business contacts;
  - The development of a speaker list to encourage business contacts to enter schools and share real time information to students about opportunities in their local economy;
  - Six career camps to present careers and opportunities to students about Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters and Pathways and schools where students can seek these job skills.

One of the first events was an Opening Doors Mini-career camps took place at Dakota County Technical College. The event included components on: Dakota County Career Overview; State and Dakota County Support Services; Biometrics: Future Trends in Employment; Employment & Training Resources; and My Transition Journey. Additionally, there were volunteers to talk with attendees about careers in the following areas: Arts, Communications and Information Systems; Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources; Health Science Technology; Human Services; Arts, Communications, & Information Systems; Business, Management, and Administration; Engineering, Manufacturing, & Technology; and Human Services

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**WSA 15 – RAMSEY COUNTY WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS, INC.**

**SERVICE AREA:** Ramsey County

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *To provide recommendations relative to policy direction and program oversight for implementation of WIA and other funding for youth activities and to develop, implement and monitor a long-range plan for the Youth Council.*

**YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **The Outreach to Schools** initiative will serve 300 students at the Guadalupe Alternative Program and 300 students at Johnson High School.
- **The Youth Council** has identified 3 strategic goals and assigned members to work on each goal - YC subcommittees meet on the off months when the full YC does not meet:
  1. To promote personal and career development for youth
  2. To promote education and training needed for workforce success
  3. To promote work-based learning to support successful transitions into the workforce and independence
- **The YC has taken a leadership role in promoting Job Corps** coordination strategies and assisting young offenders in re-entering the community.
- **Ramsey County Workforce Solutions has initiated a ‘credential’ based Customer Services Training** at St. Paul College. Over 100 youth obtain a credential every year.

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**WSA 16 – WASHINGTON COUNTY WORKFORCE CENTER**

**SERVICE AREA:** Washington County

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *“Empowering youth to be successful in work and life.”*

**YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **The Washington County youth council participates in an annual Career Day** event held at Century College. The event serves high schools throughout Washington County and exposes students to career and educational opportunities. Youth are given the opportunity to meet with professionals who represent the 6 career fields outlined in MnCareers, listen to a panel of professionals discuss their unique career paths and tour programs offered at NE Metro Career & Technical Center and Century College.
- **The Youth Council also participates in a Career Skills Day** designed for youth with disabilities from Washington County school districts. This event provides youth with assistance in filling out job applications, problem solving and interviewing. Youth are able to practice these skills and compete for jobs in a safe environment. They are also given an opportunity to learn about community resources that are available to them now and after graduation.
- **Youth participate in work readiness training** through an interactive workshop entitled “Creating Success in the Workplace”. The workshop prepares youth for what to expect in the workplace and provides the tools to be successful. Topics covered include appropriate workplace behavior such as language, appearance, cell phone use,

professional relationships, attendance and work ethic. Long term employment goals are discussed and youth are encouraged to register for additional job search and financial education workshops offered through the Washington County Workforce Center.

- **The Youth Employment Counselor participates in a transition advisory group for foster care youth aging out of care.** The group also includes county social workers, mental health case managers, life skills trainers and housing advocates. Monthly meetings are held to discuss resources and also to address specific cases needing extra attention.
- **Youth participants in Tree Trust's Youth Conservation Corps (YCC)** have the opportunity to earn elective academic credit during the course of their summer employment through a partnership with Northeast Metro ALC. Youth working during the nine-week program are eligible to earn one credit for every 60 hours of work (up to two credits). The youth participants complete word processing and spreadsheet lessons to further enrich their understanding of their project and its impact on the community, their personal finances and the impact this job can have on their future employment. Youth must complete the required number of hours and must receive satisfactory evaluations from their supervisor in order to earn the credit(s).
- **Washington County partnered with Goodwill Easter Seals** during the summer of 2010 to provide work experience for youth. Youth worked in a Goodwill store for 8-10 weeks. The Youth Program provided work readiness training and wages. Goodwill Easter Seals provided the worksite, supervision and a mentor. The mentor visited youth weekly to check in and provide assistance. Youth received a detailed evaluation after the first few weeks of employment. They were informed of strengths, areas needing improvement and how the skills they were learning would benefit them in future jobs. Youth workers did very well at this site and several were considered for permanent employment. Continued collaboration is planned based on the success of this project.

## **WSA 17 – STEARNS-BENTON EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COUNCIL**

**SERVICE AREA:** Benton and Stearns counties

**MISSION:** *“The mission of the Youth Council is to lead and bring together community resources to focus on youth becoming capable and satisfied workers.”*

### **YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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### **EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

- **All youth services are provided within the context of the Workforce “U”.** The purpose of Workforce “U” is to meet the workforce needs of business and job seekers, building prosperity by acquiring, advancing and transferring skills in strategic industries. This locally-developed and trademarked model was piloted in October 2005. The Stearns-Benton Workforce Council, working with strategic industry employers, identified a service delivery mechanism and skill certification program for these industries, which is Workforce “U”. All Youth Council activities are designed to apply these strategies to reach the emerging worker.
- **CareerONE**, an intensive summer offering of Workforce “U”, provides at risk youth ages 14 – 21 work readiness skills, training in a safe, nurturing and learning rich environment. The purpose of the summer program is to give at-risk youth a realistic and positive work readiness training experience and to keep youth from regressing academically during the summer months. Summer components include: teamwork, contextual academic enrichment, career exploration, work readiness skills, workplace safety, financial literacy, reflections and journaling, and work projects for community based organizations and agencies. CareerONE has an average completion rate over eight years of 96 percent.
  - Financial Literacy Training: Junior Achievement’s Finance Park<sup>®</sup> was added to CareerONE 2010 with JA Finance Park<sup>®</sup> certificates awarded to 100 percent of the youth.
  - Work Readiness Training: CareerONE also features ACT’s National Career Readiness Certificate<sup>®</sup> (ACT<sup>®</sup> NCRC<sup>®</sup>) with youth completing a WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> pre-assessment and skill advancement curriculum with the KeyTrain<sup>®</sup> on-line learning

- modules. 100 percent of CareerONE participants received an ACT<sup>®</sup>NCRC<sup>®</sup> with 23 percent receiving bronze-level, 48 percent receiving silver-level, and 29 percent receiving gold-level. The Workforce “U” Employability Skills Certificate is awarded to youth who achieve a 95 percent competency in attendance, punctuality and dress code; teamwork, cooperation and safety; and work quality/work quantity, 97 percent of youth achieved the Workforce “U” Employability Skills Certificate. Workforce “U” Safety Certificates were issued to 97 percent of the youth who demonstrated the ability to be safe 100 percent of the time.
- Meeting Community Needs: Eleven TANF summer youth participants who speak Somali were placed at five Somali owned businesses. Worksites were specifically developed with employers who served the area Somali population. The worksites observed and modified operating hours during Ramadan so that participants were able to work their fully scheduled work week while observing the Muslim holy month.
  - **The Youthbuild Program** is operated in collaboration with the St. Cloud Area School District 742, Area Learning Center and Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity. Youthbuild provides an opportunity for high school dropouts and potential dropouts to focus on completing high school while working part-time on Habitat for Humanity Housing Projects. Youthbuilders learn basic safety and construction skills while improving the availability of low-income housing in the community.
  - **Outreach to Schools** places nine interns in nine area high schools to provide career exploration, career fairs, job search assistance, college information and current labor market information to youth and families.
  - **Discovery Academy** is a high school initiative of the St. Cloud Technical and Community College. It provides an opportunity to take college courses in a high school setting and earn a college transcript. The Discovery Academy website connects teachers, learners and business partners with worksite learning opportunities.
  - **Project Lead The Way (PLTW)**, a pre-engineering/engineering technology curriculum challenges high school students to consider Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) careers.
  - **Students Technology and Robots (S.T.A.R.) Camp**, an initiative stemming from the St. Cloud Technical and Community College’s partnership with 360° Center of Excellence for Manufacturing and Applied Engineering, promotes engineering/manufacturing to a younger audience of students in an attempt to trigger interest and appreciation for the career field.
  - **Career and Technical Education Programs** offer excellent after school and summer opportunities. Career & Technical Education, College Bound, Business Education Partnerships of St. Cloud Area School District 742 offer creative options including Camps to Careers (S.T.E.M. Academy, Digital Media Academy, Health Care Academy), and F4 Focus on the Future - Family Forums.
  - **Youth Zone** at the Minnesota WorkForce Center – St. Cloud offers a special place for youth to access universal services of the Minnesota WorkForce Center.

**WSA 18 – WINONA COUNTY WORKFORCE COUNCIL**

**SERVICE AREA:** Winona County

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *“To develop an integrated network of supports and services which strengthen children and families.”*

**YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR:**

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**EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE YOUTH SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES:**

**Best Practices**

- Hot Jobs Uncovered is a Career Exploration Camp targeting technology-based jobs in growing sectors and clusters among regional employers. This project is a collaboration between the Winona WorkForce Center and Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical.

The camp uses a spy theme to offer hands-on experiences designed to encourage youth and job-seekers to pursue higher education and training for “hot” careers.

- Our Youth Programs contracts with Community Education to provide classroom training for the National Work Readiness Credential (NWRC) to youth over the summer. Students had the opportunity to test for the credential. Those successfully earning the credential have the opportunity to do practice interviews with NWRC employers.
- WorkForce Center staff worked to continue to promote and expand the Youth Zone with the assistance of a Pathways to Employment grant. This includes creation of Facebook and Twitter sites while working to further a virtual presence for young adults. Students

participated in the process by completing a series of questions on survey monkey to help with site planning.

- Enhanced summer orientation for youth participating in the summer work program to offer a three part series. The first part reviews information on child labor laws, work site responsibilities, how to keep a job, managing money and safety on the job; part of the training uses computer generated games. The second part covers job seeking skills to help youth find their next job. Finally the third part uses our laptop lab for students to write up to date resumes and cover letters.
- Continue to develop the “Know Your Rights” curriculum updating activities for all work experience coordinators in the service area to utilize during the school year in the classroom.
- The Outreach to Schools grant allows the use of an intern to be scheduled in each school district in Winona County doing a variety of career related activities and promotion of the Workforce Center.

### **Strategies**

- Increase awareness of Hot Jobs available in our area and training needed to be successful in the field. Explore ways to decrease cost of the camp.
  - Hot Jobs Camp
  - Robotics Camp – partner with University of Minnesota Extension
  - Job Seeking Skills Workshops
- Continue to enhance and grow the Youth Zone that includes a virtual presence for young adults to gain accurate job seeking skills and career exploration assistance with the ability to respond to topics or ask questions.
- Coordinate with University of Minnesota to create an e-mentoring program to pilot at the ALC. Identify and contact business mentors, matching with 20-25 students. Orient work experience teacher to the e-mentoring curriculum. Train mentors. Assess project. Work to expand over the summer.
- Continue to update activities to the “Know Your Rights” curriculum.
- Explore adding the Career Readiness Credential as an additional tool to offer as part of an assessment package.
- With funding, continue Outreach to Schools Grant.

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