
MINNESOTA BEST PRACTICES: WIA Youth and Job Corps Coordination

Agencies: Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS); Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

Service areas: Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Pine, Renville, Sherburne, and Wright Counties (CMJTS); Ramsey County (Workforce Solutions)

Overview of Program:

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program serves youth ages 14 through 21 who are economically disadvantaged and are one or more of the following: basic skills-deficient, pregnant or parenting, homeless, a runaway, foster child, or a youth who needs additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment. Services include assessment, work experience, basic skills training, mentoring, follow-up and support services, counseling, leadership development, and summer employment. These services are provided through a network of public and private non-profit youth service providers, WorkForce Centers, and partnerships with local educational agencies. Workforce Councils/Youth Councils in each of Minnesota's sixteen local Workforce Service Areas (WSAs) are responsible for strategic planning, program oversight, coordination of resources, and selection of service providers.

Job Corps is a free residential education and vocational training program for low income youth, ages 16-24. The mission of Job Corps is to provide services that focus on career preparedness, career development, and transitional services. Job Corps provides an environment that offers safe harbor and supportive services based on each student's individual needs. This results in quality job placements and opportunities with long-range prospects for self-sufficiency. The Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center (HHHJCC) is located in St. Paul, Minnesota. Additional information on the HHHJCC, including eligibility requirements, can be found at: <http://huberthumphrey.jobcorps.gov>.

Examples of Collaborative Activities Occurring with CMJTS:

- A representative from the HHHJCC is an active member of the CMJTS Youth Council and has presented information on Job Corps to the Central Minnesota Workforce Investment Board.
- The Job Corps representative participated in the state monitoring of the CMJTS youth programs as a Youth Council member, and openly shares input and ideas learned from this experience with the CMJTS agency.
- CMJTS Youth Employment Specialists participate in pre-orientation activities and tours of the HHHJCC with Job Corps youth to learn how the Job Corps programs can help support the CMJTS youth mission.

MINNESOTA BEST PRACTICES: WIA Youth and Job Corps Coordination

- CMJTS staff identify youth who would benefit from the unique services available through the Job Corps residential training program.
- CMJTS staff work with youth returning to their local communities following their graduation from the Job Corps program.
- The WorkForce Centers in the 11 county WSA provide information on Job Corps in a dedicated space known as the Youth Zone in the Resource Room. This area invites use by young people and has dedicated resources and curriculum for youth.
- A Job Corps admissions representative is available to come to the CMJTS area to meet and discuss the Job Corps program with staff or youth.
- The Youth Council will also tour the Job Corps Center to become more familiar with its resources and thus be better able to continue planning future collaboration.

Examples of Collaborative Activities Occurring with Workforce Solutions:

- Representatives from the HHHJCC are active members of the Ramsey County Youth Council and have presented information on Job Corps to the Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board.
- The Job Corps Director participated in developing the Ramsey County Youth Annual plan.
- Workforce Solutions YouthLEAD Youth Employment Specialists are members of The Community Relations Council at the HHHJCC.
- Workforce Solutions YouthLEAD Youth Employment Specialists and YouthLEAD Vendors assist Job Corps youth with Service Learning and Work-Based Learning Projects (i.e. participating in job seeking/keeping activities, attending job fairs, providing volunteer experiences for Job Corps youth).
- YouthLEAD and Job Corps staff have developed specific procedures for a team case management approach for co-enrolling youth.
- Job Corps Staff Specialists attend YouthLEAD Counselor meetings to provide informational sessions and recruitment activities.
- YouthLEAD staff identify youth who would benefit from the unique services available through the Job Corps residential training program.
- YouthLEAD Employment Specialists participate in pre-orientation activities and tours of the HHHJC with youth to learn how the Job Corps programs can help support youth.
- Workforce Solutions YouthLEAD Program and Job Corps Program staff communicate regularly and work in tandem to provide co-enrolled youth with high quality comprehensive services.
- YouthLEAD staff work with youth returning to their local communities following their graduation from the Job Corps program.

MINNESOTA BEST PRACTICES: WIA Youth and Job Corps Coordination

- The St. Paul WorkForce Center provides information on Job Corps in a dedicated space in the Youth Job Club Room. This is a youth-oriented and youth-friendly space that has dedicated staff, resources, and relevant curriculum for youth.
- The Ramsey County Youth Council periodically holds their Youth Council meetings at the HHHJCC.

Impact on Job Seekers:

WIA Youth and Job Corps collaboration provides at-risk youth with additional opportunities to pursue training in a variety of in-demand occupations and industries, including health occupations, culinary arts, business technologies, facilities maintenance, painting and wallpapering.

In addition to vocational training, students also receive soft skill trainings in employability, job keeping skills and social skills in their personal and professional lives. Students have the opportunity to practice and apply these skills through work based learning and internship programs. Transitional workers also follow up with students for up to a year and a half after they leave the program to ensure success.

Mutual collaboration provides an opportunity to share informational resources which allow all enrolled youth to be better informed about available resources, local programs and businesses, and employment and/or training opportunities. For example, through its team case management approach in Ramsey County, Job Corps provides housing and skill training on-site and YouthLEAD provides further supportive services and work experience opportunities. Furthermore, this collaboration provides needed resources for youth who do not continue in the Job Corps program. Job Corps can use the YouthLEAD Program as a resource and/or alternative program for those youth who do not stay in the Job Corps.

Impact on Community:

Through this collaboration, the community benefits from a higher rate of students who successfully complete a level of education, who are no longer “at-risk youth”, and who are prepared to become productive members of the workforce. The partnership assists each program in meeting its goals for career development, employment success, and self sufficiency of youth. The community also has an awareness and investment and hands-on opportunity to be part of this very important work of preparing our youth for the 21st century workplace.

Mutual collaboration encourages youth to become involved in their communities by providing volunteer opportunities (block clubs, neighborhood clean-ups, and yearly celebrations, etc.) and civic engagement experiences (youth attend and participate in

MINNESOTA BEST PRACTICES: WIA Youth and Job Corps Coordination

city, county, and state meetings and hearings; youth rallies at the Capitol; voter registration activities; other youth advocacy activities).

Identification of Partners:

Key agencies involved are Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, and the Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center.

Ability to Replicate the Program:

WIA Youth and Job Corps coordination could potentially be replicated in any state or local area. The initial step to begin this process would be to add the Job Corps partners to the existing Youth Council. Areas can also arrange tours of the Job Corps Center so that youth staff have first-hand knowledge of the academic and vocational experiences available through Job Corps.

With the assistance of current technology and communication tools, even service areas that are geographically distant from the Job Corps site can create an effective collaborative relationship with Job Corps to benefit youth. For example, through e-mail and conference calling a youth could begin at a WIA provider in an out-state area, and be referred to Job Corps for training. After completion of Job Corps, the youth could return to the out-state area for additional job placement services, work experience and follow-up. Each agency can have a defined role through a team case management approach to foster success for the young person.

For additional information, contact:

Rita Borchert
Youth Program Manager
Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services
106 Pine Street
Monticello, MN 55362
Phone: 763-271-3706
Cell: 320-444-1059
Fax: 763-271-3701
E-mail: rborchert@cmjts.org

MINNESOTA BEST PRACTICES: WIA Youth and Job Corps Coordination

Terry Zurn
Youth Program Manager
Ramsey County Workforce Solutions
2098 11th Ave. E.
North St. Paul, MN 55109
Phone: 651-770-4497
Fax: 651-779-5420
E-mail: terry.zurn@co.ramsey.mn.us

Everett Waters
Career Transition Specialist
Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center
1480 N. Snelling Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
Phone: 1-800-934-5627
651-647-0442, ext. 142
Fax: 651-641-0548
E-mail: Waters.Everett@jobcorps.org

Diane Marker/Jennifer Varien
Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center
1480 N. Snelling Avenue
St. Paul, MN. 55108
Phone: 651-647-0442, Ext 166
Fax: 651-641-0548
marker.diane@jobcorps.org

Catherine Smith Edlund
Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center
1480 N. Snelling Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
Phone: 651-542-1133, Ext. 104
Fax: 651-642-0123
smithedlund.cate@jobcorps.org