

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT

Suggested

Quarterly Narrative Report

The information that DEI projects provide in the ETA Narrative Report template helps to track grantee actual performance outcomes in relation to the negotiated goals on a quarterly basis. For each reporting period, it would be helpful if grantees could provide cumulative information for each quarterly update.

Grantee Information	
Grantee Name: Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development	
Address: 332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200	
City/State/Zip: Saint Paul, MN 55101	
Grant Number : DI – 23803-12-75-A-27	Report Period: 4/1/15-6/30/15

Status of Grant Implementation and Progress To-Date

For this grant reporting period, please provide the status of implementation of the Strategic Service Delivery Components that your project is implementing to include: a. current status; b. challenges, and c. notable activities:

- Integrated Resource Team Approach:**

a. Current status:

MN's three implementation sites continued to convene Integrated Resource Team (IRT) meetings for DEI participants during this quarter to address the needs of the participants. Through June 30, IRTs have been conducted for 289 of the 378 youth enrolled in the DEI project (76%). The Youth Profile Form and Youth Action Plan documents being used by the sites help guide the formation of the IRTs. Activities in the implementation sites include:

South Central/Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) region: To date 72 Integrated Resource Team (IRT) meetings have been held. Some initial IRTs have resulted in follow-up meetings and the provision of ongoing support from the team.

The members of each team vary depending on the needs and goals of the youth. Youth are asked who they would like to invite to be part of the IRT. This may be past or current service providers, Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselors, teachers, parents or others. Vocational Advisors who work closely with the youth help them facilitate these meetings and in many cases will arrange and schedule the meetings times as well. The DRC has assisted when needed, gathering resources, contacting participants and facilitating the meetings. Staff continues to participate more in Individual Education Plans with schools as well and have become more familiar with school Special Education staff.

An example of an IRT that has continued to provide support is one that came together soon after the youth was enrolled in MVACs Youth Career Development Program. The youth struggled with completing a work experience due to anxiety caused by his disability. This youth also had difficulty participating in work readiness workshops. He had a strong desire to obtain a high school diploma, find a job and attend a local community college. He was enrolled in DEI and the IRT was formed with the agreement and input of the youth regarding who would be invited. The first IRT meeting consisted of the MVAC Vocational Advisor, VRS Transition Counselor, the DRC, the youth and his parent. The youth explained his goals and difficulties in achieving them due to the disability and the family's financial situation. Together the team was able to come up with ways to partner to assist this youth in meeting those goals. The IRT shares expertise, funding, support and guidance as the youth works toward the ultimate goal of completing a 2 year degree and working full-time. The young man has now received a high school diploma, become a leader in youth workshops, and completed a successful work experience which became permanent employment. He has moved out of his family's home and lives with roommates. He continues to work and will start his second semester of college this fall.

RMCEP region: RMCEP has 122 participants, and 105 have established Integrated Resource Teams (IRT). The RMCEP team continues to utilize the *Guideposts for Success* in conjunction with the IRT to provide a holistic approach to the participant's goals. The visual roadmap in use during the IRT process illustrates each participant's pathway to success in the career pathway they want to pursue. RMCEP continues to enhance this tool by discovering new resources and activities that lead to better outcomes for the participant. Some of these new activities will lead to additional skill attainment in both academic and vocational skills. RMCEP youth coordinators can measure and track improvements easily using this tool. National Career Readiness Certification attainment is one of the goals for all DEI participants. IRT members continue to identify resources that will aid the participant in reaching their goals, and the roadmap continues to provide all IRT members with the confidence that all involved share the same vision. While the initial draft of the roadmap is created by the DRC, the final product is a result of discussions by the team and decisions made by the participant. Improved self-advocacy skills continue to be evident by the participant through this process. The corresponding Action Plan also continues to be a valuable tool for the participant and IRT members alike.

Southeast/Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) region: WDI staff and the participating youth continue to see growth and success with IRTs. More relationships and collaborations are being established through every meeting. Eighty-two percent (82%) of youth are currently utilizing the IRT process. The DRC presented information on IRTs at the DRC Exchange in Waterloo, IA in June 2015.

b. Challenges:

No new challenges to report this quarter.

c. Notable activities:

South Central/MVAC region: PACER Center and Social Security Administration staff jointly

presented a workshop on *Social Security and Benefit Planning for Transition Age Youth* in Mankato on April 29. Nine people attended the event (7 parents, 1 student, 1 professional).

Southeast/WDI region: The WDI DRC invited PACER Center to present a parent training on *Youth with Challenging Behaviors and the IEP: How to Plan for Graduation and Beyond* in Albert Lea on May 20. Twelve parent and 6 professionals attended this training.

Statewide: Two webinars were held for implementation site staff and partners. On May 28 staff from MN Department of Education Special Education Policy and Career and College Success presented on the topic *Preparing Minnesota Students for Career and Postsecondary Opportunities: Using Personalized Learning Plans and Individualized Education Programs to Get There*. Twenty-eight professionals participated and the webinar is archived on PACER Center's website at: www.pacer.org/transition/video/player.asp?video=121 . On July 15 PACER Center staff presented a webinar entitled *Mental Health and Transition Age Youth: Preparing for the Future*. Over 100 participants registered for this webinar. Actual attendance numbers and a link to the presentation will be included in the next report.

- **Guideposts for Success:**

a. Current status:

Each local implementation site uses the Youth Profile and Youth Action Plan forms (or variations thereof) developed by PACER Center to document the use of the *Guideposts for Success* in the assessment and development of service strategies for youth participants.

South Central/MVAC region: The *Guideposts* continue to be used and referred to by Vocational Advisors as they write plans and assist youth in working toward goals. The *Guideposts* were used successfully to assist the youth mentioned above and his Mom to learn about and connect to available resources and reach goals. The *Guideposts* helped the youth and the IRT to examine and discover where the focus would need to be in providing services for this youth.

RMCEP region: Staff training has been ongoing as RMCEP continues to transition the functions of the Disability Resource Coordinator related to *Guideposts for Success* to the Youth Coordinators. Training for the quarter includes the Roadmap for Success development process and IRT facilitation training.

Southeast/WDI region: The DRC continues to conduct trainings on the *Guideposts for Success* with partner agencies and continues to support the WDI case managers with the *Guideposts*. The DRC presented information on how WDI utilizes the *Guideposts for Success* at the DRC Exchange in Waterloo, IA at the end of June.

b. Challenges:

None to report this quarter.

c. Notable activities:

Each of the three pilot sites is using the *Guideposts for Success* framework to guide the planning and delivery of services to youth enrolled in the DEI project. Data through 6/30/15

shows that 85% of participants received school-based preparatory experiences (*Guidepost 1*), 99% received career prep and work-based learning experiences (*Guidepost 2*), 88% received youth development and leadership activities (*Guidepost 3*), 92% received connecting activities (*Guidepost 4*), and 86% received family involvement and support activities (*Guidepost 5*).

South Central/MVAC region: The *Guideposts* have been incorporated into the youth directories developed by the South Central Workforce Council. These directories include information on childcare, counseling, disability resources, and education, employment, food/nutrition, and health and youth services. The directories have been printed and will be distributed to WorkForce Centers and partners in the nine-county service area. PACER Center and MDE staff were invited by the Mankato CTIC (Community Transition Interagency Committee) to give a presentation on the *Guideposts* on April 9.

RMCEP region: Youth Coordinators have taken on responsibilities of the DRC in preparation for the end of the grant and continue to identify DEI candidates and enroll them in year-round employment programs (WIOA or MN Youth Program).

Southeast/WDI region: The DRC continues to conduct trainings on the *Guideposts for Success* in schools and with partners. PACER Center and MDE staff co-presented two sessions on *Utilizing the Guideposts for Success in Transition Planning* at an event sponsored by the Rochester CTIC on April 9. Twenty-one people attended; 6 parents, 1 student, and 14 professionals).

• **Partnerships and Collaboration:**

a. Current status:

Minnesota's Shared Vision for Youth (SVY) State Team continues to be an active group meeting on a regular basis to promote and develop state-level interagency collaboration in serving the neediest youth, including youth with disabilities. The DEI Steering Committee is a subset of the SVY team. The full SVY team will be meeting on August 26 and will include an update and reflection on the DEI as the grant comes to a close. Additional representatives invited to present at the meeting include Ignite Afterschool, Junior Achievement, GRAD Minnesota, MN State Colleges and Universities, Minnesota Department of Education-Office of College and Career Readiness and Special Education Policy (with an update on Minnesota's Olmstead Plan implementation), among others. Notes from the SVY meetings are available on the SVY website at: <http://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/index/shared-vision/>

The three implementation sites continue to reach out to community organizations to leverage resources and effectively meet the needs of youth with disabilities. The local implementation sites are working with each other to share best practices and strategies that they have developed through the DEI project.

The three implementation sites are all part of Minnesota's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Transition workgroup which is meeting several times a month to address issues relating to the transition from WIA to WIOA, including the increased focus on services to out-of-school youth. Minnesota's WIOA Young Adult program webpage can be

accessed at the following site: <http://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/youth-programs/wioa-youth.jsp>

South Central/MVAC region: Partnerships continue to be maintained and strengthened, and new partners are being discovered. VRS and MVAC staff continue to meet monthly to review co-enrolled youth, referrals and share resources. Co-enrollments continue as the benefits of partnering are being realized.

One example of the benefits of co-enrollment collaboration is MRCI's Track to Success and Bridge to the Future programs. These programs provide intensive soft skills training and work experiences. VRS and MVAC DEI share costs of this program for co-enrolled youth and work together to support the youth during and after the program. VRS and MVAC staff also attend orientation with the youth and the graduation ceremony for youth who complete the program. At the end of the program VRS, MVAC and MRCI work together with the youth to determine next steps to reach his or her goal. As an example this may mean job placement services by MRCI, a work experience with MVAC, further work evaluation through VRS or other services the youth needs to reach their goals.

RMCEP region: Training for youth, their families and professionals was held in April in partnership with the local CTIC (Community Transition Interagency Committee). Another training on disability employment is scheduled for August 13 and is geared toward parents of youth with disabilities. Lakeland Mental Health continues to provide referrals to RMCEP's DEI and Ticket to Work programs. RMCEP has been awarded an \$80,000 contract to provide benefits counseling services and financial planning training to area Ticket holders in cooperation with Vocational Rehabilitation Services as part of a rapid engagement pilot project. This will start no earlier than August 2015. RMCEP and Vocational Rehabilitation partnered to present training on the fundamentals of using DB 101 with consumers.

Southeast/WDI region: The partnerships and collaboration among agencies in the Southeast region continues to grow. Not only is this creating additional opportunities for the DEI youth, but it is creating opportunities for all of the people who are served at each WorkForce Center in the WSA.

b. Challenges:

None to report this quarter.

c. Notable activities:

South Central/MVAC region: The DRC continues to be involved in the Mankato and Fairmont CTICs and the South Central Workforce Youth Council. The DRC and MVAC participated in the CTIC sponsored Work Skills Competition Day. This event is for transition age youth who are receiving Special Education Services at local schools. The competition gives youth a chance to practice and show their job search skills, such as interviewing and completing applications.

The South Central Workforce Council hosted a two-day training for the South Central WorkForce Center partners. This training focused on the inclusion of people with disabilities in

the workforce and how to reach out to business and keep them engaged. The training was very well attended by staff from several partner agencies and the evaluation results were overwhelmingly positive. As a follow-up to the training, the South Central Workforce Council plans to form a task force of local partners to continue to address the barriers to employment facing those with disabilities and to reach out to business regarding hiring and retention of those with disabilities. The Council is also exploring with ADA Minnesota the possibility of sponsoring an employer training on ADA and Employment for local employers.

RMCEP region: The RMCEP Board of Directors approved the use of resources outside of the DEI grant funding for the agency to go through the six-month CARF accreditation process. This is a major time and financial commitment on the part of the agency to expand services to individuals with disabilities.

Southeast/WDI region: WDI has created a group that focuses on supporting the disability population in the WSA. This group has networking and educational events scheduled to promote awareness and support people with disabilities. The first event was on 4/29/15. It was well attended and well received. Another event is scheduled for July as well as an Educational Event/Career Fair in September.

The DRC presented information on ways to facilitate good partnerships and collaboration at the DRC Exchange in Waterloo, IA in the end of June.

Seventy-six percent (76%) of the youth enrolled in the Southeast DEI project have completed a work experience or are currently in a work experience funded through co-enrollment in other funding streams.

Statewide: After several months of production, PACER staff completed the video, *How to Make SSI Work for You: Simply Said*, a YouTube video on Social Security and posted it on the PACER web site on June 3rd. This youth- and family-friendly video focuses on how to find help available to youth and young adults with disabilities after they leave high school. Several federal government programs including Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Work Incentives, and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provide benefits or support to eligible youth as they work towards their postsecondary and employment goals. Youth and families can use the information they learn to plan ahead and apply for the benefits and supports they need after high school. It can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMRmnlU0RVg

An article titled "Supplemental Security Income can be a bridge to employment and economic independence" was published in the Summer issue of the *PACSETER*, PACER's newsletter with a state and national circulation of 127,384. The article notes that many youth with disabilities are discouraged from finding employment because of fear that they will lose their financial benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and points out incentives that encourage young adults to be employed and receive job training while still receiving SSI.

Obstacles/Barriers to Grant Implementation, if applicable:

No additional obstacles/barriers to report this quarter.

Other Significant Accomplishments:

A total of 378 youth have been enrolled into DEI project activities since August 1, 2013, exceeding the project goal of 360. Fifty-three percent (199) of DEI participants are enrolled in WIA/WIOA; the others are enrolled in other programs such as the Minnesota Youth Program, Minnesota Family Investment Program (TANF), Youthbuild, and state-funded Youth Competitive Grant programs. The most common primary disabilities of those enrolled are emotional or behavioral disorder (32%), specific learning disability (21%), and autism spectrum disorder (17%). Sixty-nine percent (69%) of participants have not yet earned a high school diploma. MN DEI participants face challenges to completing their education and finding employment in addition to their disabilities: 46% are from families receiving public assistance; 16% are youth offenders; 9% are pregnant or parenting youth; 10% are foster youth; 7% are high school dropouts; 4% are homeless or runaway youth; and 69% are basic skills deficient.

Indicators of participant success to date include: 81% of DEI participants have attained work readiness or educational goals as described in their Individual Service Strategy; 33% have received academic credit or service learning credit; 31% have obtained a high school diploma, GED, certificate or degree; 21% have entered post-secondary education, occupational or vocational skills training or apprenticeship; and 38% have entered the military or unsubsidized employment. This data will continue to change as participants continue to attain short and long-term goals during the remaining quarter of the DEI project.

Twenty-seven Tickets are currently assigned to the DEED Employment Network as a result of the DEI project. The DEED EN has a Partnership Plus agreement in place with VRS to coordinate services for Ticket Holders also being served by VRS. The DEED EN has taken over assignment of two Tickets for customers whose cases were closed by VRS. The Partnership Plus agreement has not yet resulted in any revenue to the DEED EN. The EN has received payments from SSA totaling \$10,834 for Tickets assigned through the DEI project. DEED leadership has decided to phase out activity as a statewide administrative workforce EN when the Round 3 DEI grant ends. The State Co-Lead is working with the three implementation sites on the transition to another arrangement for assigned Tickets, including supporting those sites that wish to apply to SSA for workforce EN status.

Each of the three implementation sites was awarded state-funded Minnesota Youth at Work Competitive Grants for the two year period beginning 7/1/2015. Each agency will receive \$125,000 per year and these grants will help sustain the effective practices of the DEI: *Guideposts for Success*, integrated resource team model, and partnership and collaboration in serving at-risk youth. The DEI sites were among 41 organizations applying for funds and 22 agencies awarded funding. RMCEP has also received grant funding from the United Way of Becker County to implement HireAble, an initiative that continues the best practices learned from the DEI project.

DEED is planning regional meetings over the next several months to bring together practitioners from all over the state to share best practices in serving at-risk youth through the youth workforce system. Staff from the local DEI implementation sites will be involved in planning the agenda and sharing the successful practices of the DEI to their colleagues.

For this grant reporting period, please describe the development of any DEI products and/or materials (include electronic copies as separate attachments with your report, if available):

PACER Center staff has completed production of a Simply Said video for parents and youth regarding Social Security, work incentives and benefits planning. The video is now available online at the following URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMRmnlU0RVg>

Short-term Grant Goals (three - six months):

- Complete final grant monitoring of local implementation sites
- Phase out activity under the DEED EN and support the transition of assigned Tickets to other ENs; support local sites who wish to apply for EN status with SSA
- Complete remaining trainings planned during the grant period for local implementation site staff based on the work plan and Needs Assessment Survey results
- Develop a final report on the Partners for Youth project, sharing lessons learned from the DEI grant and recommendations/best practices for Minnesota's youth workforce system

Outstanding Questions:

None at this time.

**MINNESOTA DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE
DATA SUMMARY**

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION		
WSA: All Three Pilot Sites	Contact: Lynn Douma, State DEI Co-Lead	
Phone #: 651-259-7536	E-mail Address: Lynn.Douma@state.mn.us	
Time Period for Report (Cumulative): 8/1/2013-6/30/2015		
PARTICIPANT SUMMARY INFORMATION (CUMULATIVE)		
Total Participants Served		378
Gender	A. Male	54%
	B. Female	46%
Age	A. 14 – 15	6%
	B. 16 – 17	38%
	C. 18	24%
	D. 19 – 21	28%
	E. 22 - 24	5%
Ethnicity / Race	A. Hispanic/Latino	6%
	B. American Indian or Alaska Native	5%
	C. Asian or Pacific Islander	3%
	D. Black or African American	8%
	E. White	81%
Primary Disability	A. Autism Spectrum Disorder	17%
	B. Deaf or Hard of Hearing	1%
	C. Deaf-Blind	0%
	D. Developmental Cognitive Disability	10%
	E. Emotional or Behavioral Disorder	32%
	F. Physically Impaired	8%
	G. Developmental Delay	1%
	H. Specific Learning Disability	21%

**MINNESOTA DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE
DATA SUMMARY**

	I. Speech or Language Impairment	1%
	J. Traumatic Brain Injury	2%
	K. Visual Impairment	0%
	L. Other Health Impairment	6%
Education Level	A. 8 th grade and under	1%
	B. 9 th Grade – 12 th Grade	68%
	C. High School graduate or equivalent	25%
	D. Post-Secondary Education	6%
Other Demographics	A. Limited English Proficient	3%
	B. Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	46%
	C. Foster Youth	10%
	D. High School Drop-Out	7%
	E. Youth Offender	16%
	F. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	9%
	G. Basic Skills Deficient	69%
	H. Homeless or Runaway Youth	4%
	I. Not Employed at Program Enrollment	85%
PROGRAM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELATED ASSISTANCE		
A. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 1: School-Based Preparatory Experiences	85%	
B. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 2: Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning Experiences	99%	
C. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 3: Youth Development and Leadership	88%	
D. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 4: Connecting Activities	92%	
E. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 5: Family Involvement and Supports	86%	
F. Participated in Integrated Resource Team (IRT)	76%	
G. Co-Enrolled in WIA Youth or Adult	53%	
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE		
A. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS	81%	

**MINNESOTA DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE
DATA SUMMARY**

B. Received Academic Credit or Service Learning Credit	33%
C. Remained in School or Dropout Returned to School	58%
D. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, Certificate or Degree	31%
E. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, or Apprenticeship	21%
F. Entered Military or Unsubsidized Employment	38%
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	
A. Number of participants rating experience as "Excellent"	57%
B. Number of participants rating experience as "Very Good"	37%
C. Number of participants rating experience as "Average"	5%
D. Number of participants rating experience as "Below Average"	1%
E. Number of participants rating experience as "Poor"	1%
F. Total Number of Surveys Completed	167