



SFY 2025 Ujamaa Place Direct Appropriation

Annual Report

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Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Employment and Training Programs Division

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As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report cost approximately \$400 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

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Introduction

The Minnesota State Legislature appropriated \$1,500,000 each year in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 and 2025 to Ujamaa Place to assist primarily African American men with job training, employment preparation, internships, education, vocational housing, and organizational capacity building. ([Minnesota Session Laws – 2023, Chapter 53, S.F. 3035, Article 20, Section 2, Subdivision 3 \(aa\)](#)). The appropriation is from the workforce development fund. The enacted legislation permits the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to retain five percent of these funds for administration and monitoring, making the total grant amount available equal to \$1,425,000 per year.

Program Overview

The Ujamaa program aims to prepare participants through high-context coaching via the Theory of Transformation, which inspires personal growth through education, knowledge-building, and access to over 37 transformation services provided at no cost to participants. The Theory of Transformation program model has a three-tier journey that starts with foundational elements that provide stability for the enrolled participant, followed by program elements for participant success, that leads to the ultimate outcomes. The activities and outcomes of each level described below.

Foundational Elements: Thematic threads integrated throughout every aspect of the Ujamaa Place experience. Included in this level are the following:

- Empowerment and Spirituality
- African American Culture
- High Context Coaching
- Community of Men
- Person Centered Approach

Program Elements for Participant Success: Interacting determinants of self-transformation. Included in this level are the following:

- Academic and Employment Skill Development
- Climbing the Education Ladder
- Building Employment Skills
- Volunteering in the Community
- Life Skills Development
- Cultivating Life Skills
- Building Emotional Management and Relationship Skills
- Fulfilling Basic Needs
- Establishing a Home

Ultimate Outcomes: Participant outcomes produced as a result of the Ujamaa experience. Included in this level are the following:

- Stable Housing Situation

- Increase Education Attainment
- Secure and Retain a Job
- Connect to Family and Children
- Eliminate Contact with the Penal System

Participant Overview

Ujamaa Place opened its doors in 2010 with the mission of helping participants “achieve brotherhood, stability, and personal success”. The grant serves individuals ages 18-30, primarily Black and African Americans, from the Twin Cities seven-county metro area. Ujamaa Place provides holistic transformation opportunities for young Black men experiencing inequity at the intersection of race and poverty.

Ujamaa Place participants experience barriers and challenges including housing discrimination, low wages, extreme poverty, trauma-related illnesses from being homeless and extreme education deficiencies. Many participants are justice-impacted, meaning they have been or are at risk of being incarcerated, have had a sibling, parent, or extended family member involved in the justice system or have in some other way been affected by law enforcement to the point that such involvement has altered their life.

Program Activities

Participants meet with coaches weekly to discuss their progress and the action steps they need to take for continued progress through their transformation journey. Indicators of progress are updated weekly in these meetings and coaches take pride in the number of participants from their case load that they help to stabilize and transform. After a participant has completed their transformation journey, they are monitored for one year before being exited (successful completion). If the participant is not stable on their own for one year, they continue by re-entering a phase in their journey determined by the coach.

Employment partnerships are a critical component of the Ujamaa Place living and sustainable wage initiative. Currently, there are 31 active employment partners who provide Employment Training & Development for participants. Ujamaa Place has increased the number of their employment partners in order to serve the increased enrollment of participants seeking living and sustainable wage career opportunities, employment skills development and training, and housing that make long term employment sustainable. The ultimate outcome of securing and maintaining a job under the Theory of Transformation, is the impetus for selecting employers.

Participant Data

The participant demographic, activity, and outcome data included in this report reflects the totals from the start of the SFY 2025 grant contract on July 1, 2024, through the end of SFY 2025 June 30, 2025.

Total Participants Served: 411

Demographic Data: Gender	Total	Percentage
Female	0	0.0%
Male	411	100.0%
Other	0	0.0%
Prefer not to answer	0	0.0%

Demographic Data: Age	Total	Percentage
14 - 17	0	0.0%
18 - 20	34	8.3%
21 - 22	55	13.4%
23 - 24	81	19.7%
25 - 30	241	58.6%

Demographic Data: Ethnicity/Race	Total	Percentage
Hispanic/Latino	3	0.7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	0.7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	0.2%
Black or African American	378	92.0%
White	2	0.5%
Multi-race	24	5.8%
Other or Not Available	0	0.0%

Demographic Data: Education Level	Total	Percentage
8 th Grade and Under	1	0.2%
9 th to 12 th Grade	103	25.1%
High School graduate or equivalent	160	38.9%
Post-Secondary Education	49	11.9%
Unknown	98	23.8%

Other Demographic Data	Total	Percentage
Limited English Proficient	8	1.9%
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	0	0.0%
Foster Youth (or aged out of foster care)	54	13.1%
With a Disability	55	13.4%
HS Dropout	103	25.1%
Youth Offender	50	12.2%
Pregnant or Parenting	62	15.1%
Basic Skills Deficient	411	100.0%
Homeless or Runaway	150	36.5%
Not Employed at Program Enrollment	337	82.0%
Veteran	3	0.7%

Program Services and Activities Data	Total	Percentage
Received Education or Job Training Activities	17	4.1%
Received Work Experience Activities	17	4.1%
Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities	1	0.2%
Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities	6	1.5%
Received Mentoring Activities	411	100.0%
Received Support Services	411	100.0%

General Performance and Outcome Data	Total	Percentage
Attained Work Readiness Goals or Educational Goals	3	0.7%
Received Academic Credit or Service-Learning Credit	3	0.7%
Obtained High School Diploma, GED, Remained in School, Obtained a Certificate or Degree, or Dropout - Returned to School	6	1.5%
Entered Post-Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, Military, Job Search or Employment	3	0.7%

Expenditure Data

The SFY 25 grant contract started on July 1, 2024 and ended on June 30, 2025. SFY 25 grant funds were fully expended by the end of June 2025. The cost category breakdown of expenditures is reported below.

Budget Category	Expenditures
Administration (up to 10% allowed)	\$142,500.00
Participant Wages and Fringe Benefits	\$1,300.00
Direct Services	\$993,195.04
Support Services	\$165,244.96
Contracted Services	\$115,000.00
Total	\$1,425,000.00

Success Stories

J - When J lost his job, he received recommendations from family members to go to Ujamaa Place. J has exhibited a commitment to the program by showing up for all of his classes and appointments and putting forth the effort to achieve his goals. J has completed forklift training and welding certification through St. Paul College and has taken IT training through a partnership between Ujamaa Place and the Urban League. He also obtained a job at the State Fair through Ujamaa Place. Ujamaa Place assisted J with his job search by showing him opportunities, funding his ID, and taking him to appointments for job interviews. J's goals are to have his own housing and to pursue a career in computer hardware and software. He offers this advice to others seeking assistance in reaching their goals: "Come to Ujamaa Place. It is a wonderful opportunity. Everyone, including the Coaches and other Ujamaa Men, is here to help you. Take advantage of the opportunities that are offered."

W - Since coming to Ujamaa Place through a referral from another program, W has distinguished himself as a leader. He has participated in classes and volunteered during community events. He says, "I have done anything that needed to be done." At Ujamaa Place, W received assistance with housing and employment. He also received encouragement and assistance from the coaches in obtaining his social security card, birth certificate, and LLC for his business. Most importantly, W says Ujamaa has given him "a lot of grace in times where I fell short. They've given me the time and space to improve." W's goal is to continue to build on his music with support from his business. He would like to become a coach or a board member at Ujamaa Place. W believes in leading by example. Being older than most Ujamaa Men, W is a role model for younger men. "Leading by example, I want younger men to know that if I can succeed, they can, too. A lot of people can't find help because they don't know where to look. When I encounter young men who are looking for help with housing and employment, I tell them about Ujamaa Place. It's up to them to take the next step."