

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: 7/1/15-9/30/15

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 September 30, IRTs have been conducted for 318 of the 382 youth enrolled in the DEI project (76%). The Youth Profile Form and Youth Action Plan documents used by the sites helped guide the formation of the IRTs. Activities in the implementation sites include:

South Central/Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) region: During the grant period 100 Integrated Resource Team (IRT) meetings have been held. Some initial IRTs resulted in follow-up meetings and the provision of ongoing support from the team. This strategy has proven to be effective in coordinating services and resources for youth with disabilities. The practice of convening an IRT will continue with youth participants following the end of the DEI grant when appropriate.

RMCEP region: RMCEP has 122 participants, and 105 have established Integrated Resource Teams (IRT). Utilizing the *Guideposts for Success* in conjunction with the IRT to provide a holistic approach to the participant's goals has been an effective strategy. The visual roadmap in use during the IRT process illustrates each participant's pathway to success in the career pathway they want to pursue. The corresponding Action Plan continues to be a valuable tool

for the participant and IRT members alike and use of the IRTs as appropriate will continue following the end of the DEI grant.

Southeast/Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) region: WDI staff views the IRT as a best practice in supporting youth in the DEI project. With the assistance of the IRT the youth are able to strive and accomplish the goals they have set for themselves and gain confidence in their ability to become independent. Eighty-two percent (82%) of youth in the project utilized the IRT process.

b. Challenges:

Nothing to report this quarter.

c. Notable activities:

South Central/MVAC region: A recent IRT meeting with school staff, VRS staff, county staff, and the MVAC counselor around a youth's delayed high school graduation and lack of employment produced some great action on the youth's part. School staff agreed to allow the youth to attend summer school in August and one more semester through December 2015 to gain her high school diploma. Due to an ongoing issue with attendance, there was a plan set for the number of days the youth could miss class without impacting the end date of December 2015. The VRS and MVAC staff agreed to help the youth find her own job within reasonable distance from her home. MVAC staff will assist the youth with preparing for college in Spring or Fall 2016 and help her with career exploration to make this a reality.

This youth completed summer school classes, took the Accuplacer exam for South Central College (SCC), completed the application for SCC, found her own employment at two different jobs, and is staying on course at school with a much lower rate of absenteeism. This youth has made such strides and the staff from all areas in her life are working as a cohesive team. IRT team members help celebrate the success and give each other a heads up when things may be steering in the wrong direction.

Southeast/WDI region: The DRC supported the continuation of using the IRT process with the WDI case managers at a youth counselor meeting held in July.

Statewide: On July 15, PACER Center staff presented a webinar entitled *Mental Health and Transition Age Youth: Preparing for the Future*. This was the most well-attended MN DEI webinar with 96 participants. Fifty participants completed online evaluation surveys with all respondents rating the webinar good, very good, or excellent. Forty-eight participants reported learning something new from the webinar. The webinar is archived at the PACER website at: <http://www.pacer.org/webinars/archive-listing.asp>.

Another webinar was held on September 30 with partners from Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) presenting on the topic *Meeting the Needs of Postsecondary Students with Disabilities from Diverse Cultures* for twenty participants. This webinar is also archived and available from the weblink above.

- ***Guideposts for Success:***

a. Current status:

Each local implementation site used 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 by MVAC staff as they write plans and assist youth in working toward goals. The *Guideposts* were successful in assisting the youth, parents and partners involved in the IRTs to examine and discover where the focus should be in providing services and resources to 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 included the Roadmap for Success development process and IRT facilitation training.

Southeast/WDI region: The *Guideposts for Success* continue to be a great tool in working with the DEI youth and also with youth who are enrolled in other programs. The WDI case managers see the value in the *Guideposts* and how they can use them to support the youth in achieving their goals.

b. Challenges:

None to report this quarter.

c. Notable activities:

Each of the three pilot sites used the *Guideposts for Success* framework to guide the planning and delivery of services to youth enrolled in the DEI project. Data through 9/30/15 shows that 85% of participants received school-based preparatory experiences (*Guidepost 1*), 99% received career prep and work-based learning experiences (*Guidepost 2*), 89% 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 distributed to WorkForce Centers and partners in the nine-county service area.

RMCEP region: Youth Coordinators have taken on responsibilities of the DRC in preparation for the end of the grant and continue to identify candidates who could benefit from the strategies of the DEI.

Southeast/WDI region: The DRC continues to support and encourage WDI case managers to continue to use the *Guideposts for Success* with all youth. This practice was reiterated at the July meeting of WDI youth counselors.

- **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 met August 26 and will convene again on December 15. 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 are all part of Minnesota's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Transition workgroup which is meeting regularly 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>. As part of this workgroup, DEED Youth Services team, VRS and local Workforce Service Areas are working together on a plan to use WIOA Title IV funds for increased pre-employment transition services to in-school youth with disabilities.

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. The benefits of partnering have been continued co-enrollments and participation in IRTs to coordinate services and resources.

RMCEP region: Disability employment training for families was held on August 13 in partnership with the local CTIC (Community Transition Interagency Committee). 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.

Southeast/WDI region: The DRC continued to build upon the existing relationships developed through the DEI project and has been discussing maintaining those partnerships following the end of the formal grant. The MaxAbility Taskforce discussed below is one way those relationships will be continued.

b. Challenges:

None to report this quarter.

c. Notable activities:

South Central/MVAC region: The MVAC staff continue to have strong partnerships with Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTIC), High School Special Education staff as well as Southern Minnesota Independent Living Enterprises and Services (SMILES) for assistive technology needs.

RMCEP region: RMCEP is in the process of completing 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 beyond the DEI grant.

Southeast/WDI region: WDI has created the MaxAbility Taskforce, 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. A network event in July brought more agencies, employers and interested parties to the table and created more relationships and opportunities for collaboration. The taskforce also held a career fair for people with disabilities at the end of September.

Eighty-one percent (81%) 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.

Obstacles/Barriers to Grant Implementation, if applicable:

No additional obstacles/barriers to report this quarter.

Other Significant Accomplishments:

A total of 382 youth were enrolled into DEI project activities between August 1, 2013 and September 30, 2015, exceeding the project goal of 360. Fifty-three percent (202) of DEI participants were enrolled in WIA/WIOA; the others were 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 were emotional or behavioral disorder (32%), specific learning disability (21%), and autism spectrum disorder (18%). 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. At the time of enrollment 45% were from families receiving public assistance; 16% were youth offenders; 9% were pregnant or parenting youth; 10% were foster youth; 7% were high school dropouts; 4% were homeless or runaway youth; and 69% were basic skills deficient.

Indicators of participant success during the grant period include: 88% of DEI participants attained work readiness or educational goals as described in their Individual Service Strategy; 36% received academic credit or service learning credit; 33% obtained a high school diploma, GED, certificate or degree; 21% entered post-secondary education, occupational or vocational skills training or apprenticeship; and 40% entered the military or unsubsidized employment.

Twenty-four Tickets are currently assigned to the DEED Employment Network as a part 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. One of these Tickets has resulted in some Phase 2 milestone payments (the Phase 1 payments were not available to the DEED EN due to the successful VRS case closure). The EN has received payments from SSA totaling \$26,705 for Tickets assigned by RMCEP 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 the RMCEP site as it applies 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 holding regional meetings in October and November 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 have been involved in planning the agenda and sharing the successful practices of the DEI to their colleagues at these workshops.

DEED is partnering with Youthprise, an intermediary organization formed by the McKnight Foundation, in a Social Innovation Fund initiative supporting career pathway approaches targeting opportunity youth, including youth with disabilities. The grant awarded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to Youthprise is designed to provide needed services to these youth enabling them to become socially and economically self-sufficient. Youthprise, with the assistance of DEED, is issuing a Request for Proposals to the youth employment and training community and expects to award 6-8 subgrants of \$450,000-\$750,000 per grantee over a three-year period. The funded proposals will target a number of categories of disconnected youth including youth with disabilities.

PACER Center has provided individual information and referral services to families of MN youth with disabilities and youth-serving professionals in the pilot regions throughout the duration of the grant. PACER provided individual information to 172 individuals during the grant: 88 family members, 59 professionals, and 25 other individuals.

South Central/MVAC region: The implementation of the key strategic approaches for the DEI Project including *Guideposts to Success*, Integrated Resource Teams, and Partnerships & Collaboration have proven to be very successful and staff plans to continue the following practices after the grant period:

- **IRT meetings** have been instrumental in coordinating services and resources with multiple agencies for youth with disabilities. The IRTs have resulted in increased communication and coordination between agencies. This strategy will be helpful for all youth participants.
- ***Guideposts for Success*** represent key educational and career development interventions that make a positive difference in the lives of youth with disabilities. The *Guideposts* strategy can benefit all youth participants and has been included in the youth

assessment and Individual Service Strategy for all youth programming.

- **Partnerships & Coordination** – The DRC has developed strong relationships with numerous agencies and organizations in the community. Many agencies and organizations have participated in the IRT meetings and seen the benefits of working together to help youth with disabilities reach their goals. To build on the momentum of the DEI Project, the South Central WorkForce Council plans to develop a standing committee that focuses on services to people with disabilities under the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- **Meetings with Vocational Rehabilitation Services** – Due to the number of youth jointly being served by VRS and MVAC, staff from both agencies meet on a monthly basis to discuss co-enrolled youth, services and resources. Both agencies have a better understanding of what each other does, resulting in more referrals and ultimately more youth being served.
- **Community Transition Interagency Committee involvement** – The DRC participated in local CTIC meetings and has gained a better understanding of the services being provided to youth with disabilities through the high schools. Participation on this committee has also built a better connection to special education staff.
- **Relationship with high school special education staff** has resulted in increased referrals. The staff have a better understanding of the services that MVAC can provide to youth with disabilities.
- **Awareness of different types of disabilities** - This project has been a tremendous learning experience for staff. The DEI project has increased the level of awareness of disabilities including impact in school/work, accommodations, and services/resources that are available to help youth with disabilities achieve their employment and training goals.
- **High expectations for youth with disabilities** – The DEI Project has demonstrated repeatedly that youth with disabilities can succeed.
- **Access to resources** – The DEI Project has helped staff become more aware of the resources such as assessments, assistive technology, and training to help youth with disabilities. These resources have made it easier for youth to participate and be successful in employment and training activities.
- **Resource mapping** – The DRC collected information on area services and resources for youth with disabilities. This information was incorporated in the Youth Directory of resources in the nine county area that was developed by the Youth Council.

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 finalized the parent training curriculum and PowerPoint presentation The Bridge to Work: Supplemental Security Income (SSI) that was used and refined in parent trainings throughout the grant. The curriculum and Power Point are attached to this report.

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

- 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
- 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
- Close out the grant when the extended period of performance ends on 12/31/15.

Outstanding Questions:

None at this time.

MINNESOTA DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE DATA SUMMARY

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION		
WSA:	Contact:	
All Three Pilot Sites	Lynn Douma, State DEI Co-Lead	
Phone #:	E-mail Address:	
651-259-7536	Lynn.Douma@state.mn.us	
Time Period for Report (Cumulative):		
8/1/2013-9/30/2015		
PARTICIPANT SUMMARY INFORMATION (CUMULATIVE)		
Total Participants Served		382
Gender	A. Male	54%
	B. Female	46%
Age	A. 14 – 15	6%
	B. 16 – 17	38%
	C. 18	24%
	D. 19 – 21	27%
	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	18%
	B. Deaf or Hard of Hearing	2%
	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	5%
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	45%
	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	89%	
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)	83%	
G. Co-Enrolled in WIA Youth or Adult	53%	
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE		
A. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS	88%	

**MINNESOTA DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE
DATA SUMMARY**

B. Received Academic Credit or Service Learning Credit	36%
C. Remained in School or Dropout Returned to School	59%
D. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, Certificate or Degree	33%
E. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, or Apprenticeship	21%
F. Entered Military or Unsubsidized Employment	40%
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	
A. Number of participants rating experience as "Excellent"	59%
B. Number of participants rating experience as "Very Good"	35%
C. Number of participants rating experience as "Average"	5%
D. Number of participants rating experience as "Below Average"	0%
E. Number of participants rating experience as "Poor"	0%
F. Total Number of Surveys Completed	228