**MJSP Funded Projects**

**June 23, 2023**

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Anoka-Ramsey Community College | Toy’n Around | $49,761 | Partnership |
| Toy’n Around, located in Eden Prairie, is a broker between toy producers and retail sellers. For several decades, Toy’n Around has been a representative for toy manufacturers across the country; however, the company has recently diversified into new products and its own manufacturing efforts. These new product lines focus on youth, children’s nutritional foods, exercise equipment, and so on. In addition, Toy’n Around has expanded its business by offering its services to BIPOC-owned start-up businesses by assisting in product design, manufacturing, and distribution. Their new business approach has created a need for new skills amongst its workforce. To address the new skills required, with assistance from ARCC, the company seeks to train employees in the areas of Marketing for Diversity, AI for Social Media, Search Engine Optimization for Direct to Consumer Sales, Entrepreneurial Operating Systems, and essential business skills for a digital marketing company. It is anticipated that the training program will transform the organization to a new type of business and create a highly flexible company that is adept at operating in a diverse economy and provide ancillary benefits to the emerging, BIPOC-owned small businesses they assist.  Contact: Matthew Salo, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, 763-422-6116 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Century College | DriSteem | $40,971 | Partnership |
| DriSteem, located in Eden Prairie, is a provider of humidification control, evaporative cooling, and water treatment solutions for commercial and industrial applications. The company provides custom systems for indoor environments in data centers, health care, laboratories, manufacturing and other facilities. Due to the current labor market, finding qualified workers to maintain quality and support continued growth has become increasingly challenging. To keep production roles filled, DriSteem has hired workers with less experience and provide more on-the-job training which impacts overall efficiency. To that end, Dristeem has partnered with Century College to provide a comprehensive training program spanning entry-level skills for immediate success to more advanced training to upskill employees at all levels. Training topics to be provided include Lean Manufacturing, Leadership Skills, Basic Manufacturing Skills, and Value Stream Mapping. It is anticipated that these courses will set a consistent skill level for all production and managerial employees at DriSteem and reduce on on-the-job training costs while also providing continued hiring and advancement opportunities.  Contact: Eric Riedel, Century College, 651-779-3310 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| MN State College Southeast | Behrens Manufacturing | $49,685 | Partnership |
| Behrens Manufacturing, located in Winona, is a manufacturer of galvanized steel containers such as pails, tubs, and cans. The company has recently installed a significant amount of new automation technology in their factory to address a shortage of production operators and to improve quality and efficiency. However, this automation technology requires significant amounts of knowledge to maintain and operate the equipment safely and, therefore, Behrens Manufacturing must upskill their current workforce. The company has partnered with Minnesota State College Southeast to provide training in Tool & Die Machining, Robotics Operation, Supervision/Leadership Development, Mechatronics/Automation, and Quality Management. Trainees will receive college credits for all training and will earn college certificates for the machining and leadership training, as well as two new certificates for the mechatronics/automation training that the college is creating (an 11-credit Automation Foundation Certificate, and a 10-credit Industrial Maintenance Certificate). It is anticipated that this training will improve the efficiency of the workforce when engaging with advanced automation tools while also providing promotional pathways for select employees.  Contact: Jennifer Olson, MN State College SE, 507-453-1471 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| South Central College | Twin Cities Closet | $49,832 | Partnership |
| Twin Cities Closet Company (TCC), located in Minneapolis, is a small family-owned business that designs, manufactures, and installs a variety of custom storage solutions. In addition to custom closets, TCC customizes spaces in kitchens, laundry rooms, mudrooms, entryways, and garages. Due to recent growth, TCC has realized they must adopt business management methods employed in a growing enterprise. Furthermore, the expanding range, type, and number of projects is requiring higher levels of technical skill and more effective communication skills. South Central College and TCC have collaborated to develop a comprehensive training program that will include topics in Co-Worker as Client, Elements of Creating a Satisfied Customer, Influence Without Authority, Being Your Own Boss, and Train-the-Trainer. By promoting effective collaboration among employees, TCC aims to optimize productivity and deliver high-quality outcomes. This collaboration will support TCC's growth and ensure their workforce is equipped with the necessary skills to meet evolving demands.  Contact: Tanja Sigurdson, South Central College, 805-389-7392 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| University of Minnesota – Twin Cities | Optum Inc | $45,701 | Partnership |
| Optum, located in Eden Prairie, is a technology-enabled health services business with many IT departments that are responsible for the onboarding and management of medical devices, patient billing systems, health record systems, software development and selection, storage of digital medical data, and linkages and integrations with hospital and clinic partners and subsidiaries. To mitigate cybersecurity risks that can affect patient health and safety, mid-level IT professionals and decision-makers at Optum need the latest information on how to approach security in a coordinated, integrative way that includes the latest government guidance and requirements, techniques for reducing risk, and structured opportunities for internal sharing of information. To that end, Optum has partnered with the University of Minnesota’s Technological Leadership Institute to provide training in the areas of Architecting Secure Infrastructures, Clinical Ecosystem Security, Planning and Risk Assessment, and Incident Response and Recovery. By collaborating with the University of Minnesota, Optum aims to provide its personnel with the latest cybersecurity countermeasures to safeguard client information in the everchanging cybersecurity landscape. In addition, the University of Minnesota’s Technological Leadership Institute will integrate some of the content developed in this project into ongoing, for-credit, workforce development courses.  Contact: Scott Singer, University of Minnesota, 612-624-5214 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| University of Minnesota – Twin Cities | Electrification Consortium | $48,400 | Pre-Development |
| Toro Company, located in Bloomington, Design Ready Controls, located in Brooklyn Park, and Polaris, located in Medina, are manufacturing businesses that each specialize in an area of mechanical engineering, electrical design, or motor sports manufacturing. Over the last 15 years, these companies, amongst others, have seen a technological disruption of transportation, manufacturing, energy generation, and construction due to the proliferation of renewable and electrified technologies. This includes everything from residential solar systems, electric vehicles, battery powered chain saws, and hybrid electric HVAC units. Minnesota is positioned to benefit from both the private and public sector investments in electrification more so than nearly any other state due to the unique technology cluster which has underpinned much of the regional economy over the last century. Corporations such as Polaris, Thermo King, Toro, Xcel Energy, and 3M are all major stakeholders in this transition to the electrified world. This move towards electrification will require the upskilling or reskilling of occupations, such as technicians, electricians, and engineers, to help integrate, troubleshoot, and design the systems which leverage these rapidly evolving technologies. However, there is currently a lack of curriculum to upskill and reskill employees in these fields, a lack of transferable pathways between Minnesota's key educational institutions and declines in collegiate enrollment. Due to this confluence of opportunity and challenges, the University of Minnesota is partnering with regional industry members to pursue the nation's first center dedicated to electrification workforce development, the Minnesota Center for Electrification Opportunity (MNCEO). Through this Pre-Development grant and the launch of the MNCEO, the University of Minnesota and the three business partners aim to develop a future grant proposal that illustrates long-term operations, deliverables, and benefits to the state of Minnesota. To this end, they will identify appropriate business and educational partners, identify specific positions and occupations to focus on, identify regional nonprofit organizations that can assist in recruiting of small businesses and professionals for training opportunities, and develop a training plan for online asynchronous training, including the identification of specific customers, registration process, and management process.  Contact: Scott Singer, University of Minnesota, 612-624-5214 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| Anoka-Ramsey Community College | Kraus-Anderson | $398,908 | Partnership |
| Kraus-Anderson (KA), headquartered in Minneapolis, is an integrated development, construction and real estate leasing and management enterprise. This project will focus on their construction operations which provides pre-project planning services, pre-construction services, construction services, and post-occupancy services. KA has identified multiple trends across the industry and the larger economy that they will need to respond to if they are to remain competitive. Specifically, this project will help the company proactively respond to trends that include construction industry technology, commercial space conversion, the changing face of the population, concern for the environment, a declining workforce, and hybrid working environments. The training proposed addresses five operational areas that cross the entire lifespan of construction projects from conception to realization and beyond. The Project Acquisition will include training to develop potential customer trust and explain KA’s capabilities in a virtual environment; Preconstruction training will include topics in artificial intelligence, virtual estimating, adaptive reuse, advanced pre-construction, pre-construction analytics, designing for diversity, and mental health and suicide prevention; Construction training will include topics in MN Energy Code, net zero energy methods, employing decarbonization, construction analytics, designing for DEI, concrete radar technology, and FARO Sphere3D Flat Floor Technology; Post-Construction will include training in Digital Twin (3D models of construction process from beginning to end) production and applications; and Construction Support Operations training will include topics in virtual record systems, virtual security, digital dashboards, and Exchange Online.  Contact: Matthew Salo, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, 763-422-6166 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| South Central College | Knobeldorff | $375,000 | Partnership |
| Knobelsdorff Enterprises, located in Goodhue, is an automation, electrical, engineering, renewable energy, and power services company. Knobelsdorff has a large, growing long-term customer base and is faced with fulfilling the expanding needs and expectations of that growing customer base with fewer available workers. Data shows that the number of electricians retiring every year exceeds the number entering the industry while the demand for electricians is increasing. In order to grow and retain their workforce into the future, Knobelsdorff has implemented an Electrician Apprenticeship program, has recently hired a training coordinator, and will be installing an in-house learning management system. While Knobelsdorff has a commitment to workforce education, they do not have the educational expertise to assess, develop, and provide a training program that will address priority training needs across its entire workforce. Knobelsdorff is partnering with South Central College (SCC) to provide training in nine separate subject matter areas: Workplace Diversity, Standard Operating Procedures, NFPA 70E Training, Variable Frequency Drives (VFD) Training, Apprenticeship Certification, Learning Content Management System Vetting, New Leadership Development, Onboarding, and Comprehensive Safety. The training program is comprehensive in scope, but major attention is paid to certification training necessary for maintaining production and safety standards in the workforce. The Apprenticeship Certification training will prepare trainees for the electrical license. New Leadership training is intended to provide upward mobility options to employees while also opening up job opportunities at apprentice level positions.  Contact: Tanja Sigurdson, South Central College, 805-389-7392 | | | |

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| **Grantee** | **Contributing Business (es)** | **Amount** | **Program** |
| St. Cloud State | LCI Inc | $216,363 | Partnership |
| Landwehr Construction Inc. (LCI) is a construction business, located in St. Cloud, that focuses on all phases of road construction including site removals, utilities, and earthwork and provides services in crane & rigging, demolition, environmental remediation, highway heavy, etc. The construction industry in Minnesota is the fastest growing industry in the state despite large worker shortages. A shortage of labor can be found in most industries at this time, but a lack of skilled labor presents unique challenges for construction industries. Worker shortages are being stemmed in this industry via the introduction of autonomous construction vehicles. However, these vehicles are complex in their usage and require extensive training to be applied correctly and safely. A lack of skilled workers in the labor market and a rapidly changing technology has prompted LCI to partner with St. Cloud State to form a training plan. The training plan will also address a need to develop their emerging leaders as part of succession planning. The training program has four main tracks: Workforce Development/Employee Engagement, Technical and Operational Skills, Construction Training, and Computer Technical Skills. Employees will be onboarded with enhanced team communication strategies and DE&I initiatives while also empowering supervisors and emerging leaders with leadership training. Welding, Heavy Construction, and First Aid/CPR training will supplement the workforces general site working skills while Construction Training will train select employees in the handling of complex and automated construction vehicles. The latter ranges from CDL training to Construction Truck Operators and Driver’s Vehicle Inspection Report training. Finally, employees will receive comprehensive computer skills training ranging from MS Office to specific construction software usage.  Contact: Ileana Merten, St. Cloud State University, 320-308-6160 | | | |