Workforce Diversity in Northeast Minnesota

We surveyed over 1,000 Minnesota employers to see what diversity means to them. Here’s what employers in the Northeast part of the state told us.

What is diversity?

Employers use the term “diversity” to refer to many different things. Survey respondents in Northeast Minnesota say they talk about...

- Percent of regional employers agreeing that they include the following in their definition of diversity:
  - Race/ethnicity: 81%
  - Gender: 71%
  - Age: 70%
  - Sexual orientation: 63%
  - Disability: 59%
  - National origin: 57%

So, are businesses diverse?

65% of Northeast Minnesota employers report that their workforce is diverse, according to their own definition of diversity.

Did You Know?

In Northeast Minnesota...

- The region saw its population increase by 3,730 residents from 2000 to 2015, a 1% gain, as compared to a 12% rise statewide.
- The region is projected to have a relatively stable population in the next 20 years.
- The region’s largest communities of color in 2014 are American Indian (8,890), residents of two or more races (7,530), and Hispanic or Latino (4,200).

How diverse is the workforce in Northeast Minnesota?

- Percent of jobs held by persons of color in the Northeast region...
- When asked about racial diversity...
  - 12% of regional employers say they do not employ workers who identify with a community of color.
  - The good news is...
    - Half of the region’s employers are actively trying to increase the racial diversity of their workforce.

Are businesses as racially diverse as their communities?

The population in Northeast is less diverse than the state overall, but is becoming more diverse over time.

- The fastest growing segment of the region’s population are people from communities of color, Residents of the Black or African American (83%), two or more races (77%), Hispanic or Latino (76%), and Asian (47%) communities grew the fastest between 2000 and 2014.

We asked businesses to think about the racial diversity of their workforce as compared to the diversity of their community.

- Nearly one in three businesses in Northeast Minnesota report that their workforce is less diverse than their customer base.

Northwest Minnesota is expected to face a declining labor force between 2015 and 2025. This means the region will face a tight labor market in the future, with employers needing to respond to changing labor force availability in the region.

Sources:
- Minnesota Employer Workforce Diversity Survey, 2016
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
- American Community Survey & Quarterly Workforce Reports
- U.S. Census Bureau

Visit mn.gov/deed/diversity for more