

ABOUT YOUTH AT WORK OPPORTUNITY GRANTS

Youth at Work Opportunity Grants provide workforce development and training opportunities to low-income or at-risk youth, ages 14-24, with special consideration to youth from communities of color.

Youth served include those who are out-of-school and/or involved in the foster care and juvenile justice system, youth living in Minnesota Family Investment Program households, homeless or runaway youth and youth with disabilities.

Youth served lack academic and applied skills considered critical for career success and workforce needs.

SFY2025 AT A GLANCE

- Total youth served in experiential learning: **11,799**
- Number of youth who received individualized case-management services, work experience, experiential learning, career planning: **10,154**
- Number of youth who received career planning, job search, college or post-secondary guidance on jobs important to regional economies: **4,590**
- Gender: **46% male 50% female**
- Youth from communities of color: **76%**
- Youth who obtained HS diploma, GED, certificate, degree, or dropout returned to school: **50%**
- Youth who attained work readiness or education goals: **73%**
- Funding: **\$7.448 million** from the Workforce Development Fund and General Fund
- Cost per participant: **\$631**

YOUTH AT WORK Success Stories



Brandon attended Washburn Senior High, Minneapolis. He was a Step Up intern at Minnesota Alliance with Youth, where he led the Youth Education Leadership Summit. Through his work on the Summit he learned how to effectively network and coordinate large groups. He plans to return to Step Up for a second summer to build on his work skills. When Brandon graduates high school, he plans to go to college to study psychology and join the Navy.



Emily was very interested in the money smart component of CareerOne. There she learned the differences between a debit and credit card and how finances and loans help people out in college. Before CareerOne Emily didn't give college any thought but now she is getting ready and preparing herself for college after graduation. "My experience at CareerOne was one of the best experiences I've had at any program."



Brendan worked with Tree Trust for three summers. His crew leader says he "demonstrated tremendous work ethic; [was] always working and [showed] initiative by asking for more things he [could] do to help complete the project." Brendan originally wanted to be a Pharmacy Technician, but after working outdoors, he now wants to open his own landscaping business. After graduating high school he decided to enroll in Tree Trust's Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) to learn more about this field.



Kevis attended Saint Paul College. Kevis has ADHD and struggled through his first semester and was on academic suspension. Kevis began meeting with a career counselor through Ramsey County Young Adult Employment to help him determine employment and career path options. Kevis was hired as a temporary worker for the Twin Cities Auto Show. After he successfully completed this assignment, Kevis was placed in an internship with the Ramsey County Manager's Office. Kevis is eager to return to school next semester and plans on obtaining a law degree.



Gaolee enrolled in the Anoka County Empowers Youth Program when she was 19. She was out of school, unemployed and had two young children. She began her work experience placement at a hospital and was later hired part time as a dietary aide. She later passed the Nurse Aid/Home Health Aide exam. Her plan is to work for a few years as a Nurse Aide and then return to school for training as a Registered Nurse when her children are both in school.



PRIORITIES, IMPACT AREAS AND GOALS FOR ALL PROPOSALS:

- Workforce development and training opportunities include summer and/or year-round work experience and an introduction to career pathways
- Increase exposure to in-demand jobs important to regional economies
- Introduce and promote career pathways and skill acquisition, academic preparedness and work readiness through project-based instruction
- Promote mastery of work readiness competencies and 21st Century skills, as demonstrated through workplace portfolios and other assessments
- Provide high-quality worksites and overall participant and employer satisfaction

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION WAS AVAILABLE FOR PROPOSALS WHICH:

1. Included private sector internships and/or work experience in the private sector
2. Provided students with information about education and training requirements for careers in high- growth, in-demand occupations
3. Served youth from communities of color who are under-represented in the workforce
4. Served youth with disabilities

YOUTH AT WORK Success Stories



Howard enrolled in YES Duluth in October 2017 to get help staying on track in school and obtaining employment. Thanks to YES Duluth, Howard received service learning credits that helped him earn his diploma. With help from his YES Duluth counselor, he started at Lake Superior College. Howard has completed his goals with YES Duluth and is excited to work toward a college degree.



Allie came to Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program (RMCEP) with poor high school grades and no work history. While participating in the MYP and WIOA In-School Youth programs, RMCEP counselors helped the Bemidji high school student create a comprehensive career plan. Two years later, she was named the Boys and Girls Club Minnesota Youth of the Year and received a \$15,000 college scholarship. Allie now attends the University of Minnesota Duluth and plans to become a social worker for at-risk youth.



Eric came to Anoka County's Empowers Youth Program. During his first year, he worked as a custodial assistant at the Anoka County Government Center, where he got the opportunity to work independently and complete assigned cleaning tasks. He enjoyed working for Anoka County and found value in completing a task and took pride in seeing good outcomes from his work.



Kymel's experience with CareerONE has not only prepared and equipped him for the workplace, but also for everyday life. He learned many life skills like how to be a leader and how to step up in a variety of situations. He also learned about integrity, respect, and leadership through team building exercises at the YMCA. He appreciates how CareerONE focuses on giving youth the knowledge and tools to be ready for the workforce.



Armani came to Genesys Works with the desire to make the most of every opportunity. During her time with Genesys Works, she earned great experience through an internship with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota. She is graduating this spring from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities with a degree in International Business and Management Information Systems. After graduation, Armani plans to work as a Technology Consultant for Accenture.



Statutory Authority: MN Statutes 116L.56

For More Information:

Kay Tracy, Director (651.259.7555)
Office of Youth Development,
MN Department of Employment and Economic Development

<https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/special/grants/>

CareerForce

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