

2008-2009
Annual Report

Minnesota WorkForce Center-
St. Cloud

Provide comprehensive services through a valued customer approach to meet the workforce development needs of employers, job seekers, and communities.

Dear Citizens of Stearns and Benton Counties:

During the 1 July 2008 – 30 June 2009 fiscal year, the Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council Joint Powers Board and the Stearns-Benton Workforce Council continued our commitment to:

- Maintain businesses' competitiveness by supporting a flexible, skilled workforce; and
- Improve people's ability to increase personal income.

Previously initiated activities continued. Partners for Strategic Growth utilized a grant made available from the Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development to conduct a reassessment of the strategic industries and 7 Forms of Capital (National Council on Competitiveness) for the 4-County Central Minnesota Region. This reassessment is available at http://www.workforceu.com/pdfs/2008_community_assessment_summary.pdf. Stearns and Benton Counties provided \$163,952 in cash subsidy for Calendar Year 2009 for Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council to continue operating as a Workforce Service Area.

SBETC continued year two of its Workforce "U" pilot funded by the Minnesota Legislature for a three-year period to build and measure the impact of the model in integrating community resources to prepare job seekers to meet employer needs. A strategy in developing this model is to continue to build on our area's strengths, including the co-location of the WorkForce Center with the St. Cloud Technical College. The Stearns-Benton Workforce Council's "Breakfast with the B.E.S.T." series of workshops which showcase and share area business talent continued with monthly topics.

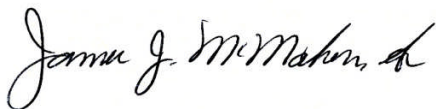
The primary area of concern for the Board, Council and Staff in 2008 – 2009 was the recession and the dramatic increase in service requests received by community and WorkForce Center partners. Existing resources were re-directed and additional resources mobilized to serve individuals, families, and businesses impacted by the economic shift. Additional resources included an allocation of \$1.6 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) or Stimulus funds.

Thank you to the Board, the Council, federal, state and local government, community and staff for all you've done to help.

A special message of hope to employers and job seekers with whom we partner.

For more information about how you can be involved or about services, please call 320.308.5702.

Sincerely,



James J. McMahon, Sr., Chairperson
Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council
Joint Powers Board



T. Kent Gilmore, Chairperson
Stearns-Benton Workforce Council

Stearns-Benton Workforce Council

The Workforce Council is appointed by the Joint Powers Board. The Council, as a "Workforce Investment Board", is responsible for providing leadership on current and emerging workforce issues in the region. By law, the Council defines the size and shape of the local workforce development system and its own role within that system; sets the overall direction for the local workforce development system; establishes or approves operational structures and makes operational policies for the workforce development system as a whole; oversees the performance of the system; has a role in external relations, public relations, and marketing for the workforce development system; encourages new ideas to advance the state-of-the-art; works to augment the system's available resources; and serves as an "honest broker" among the various parts of the workforce development system. Other duties include overseeing the integration of various programs and agencies under the one-stop, or WorkForce Center, initiative. At least 51% of Council members must represent the private sector. The following members served in the period 1 July 2008-30 June 2009:

T. Kent Gilmore, Chairperson COO Nahan Printing	Skip Wittrock, Manager DEED, Rehabilitation Services MN WorkForce Center - St Cloud	David Waage Employment Director St. Cloud Hospital
Corey Donat, Chair-Elect Human Resources Director ING Direct	Jill Magelssen Franchise Owner Express Employment Professionals	Russ A. Weeks VP/Senior Lender American National Bank
Linda Besse, Past Chairperson Human Resources Manager Komo Machine, Inc.	Carol Nieters Regional Contract Organizer SEIU Local 284	Steve Raatikka Business Representative Sheet Metal Workers Local #10
John Rogan, Consultant Dezurik Water Controls	Dr. Fred Nolan Superintendent Foley Public Schools	David J. Borgert Director, Government Relations Centra-Care Health Systems
Joyce Helens, President St. Cloud Technical College	William Scarince President W.F. Scarince, Inc.	
Noreen Dunnells, CPO United Way of Central Minnesota	Sandy Lambertson Financial Supervisor Benton County Human Services	
Les Engel Owner & Metallurgical Engineer, Engel Metallurgical, Ltd.	Tom Moore, President St. Cloud Area Economic Development Partnership	
John Burgeson Dean of Continuing Studies St. Cloud State University	Susan Pederson HR Operations Manager Bernick's Pepsi	
Michael Eichten Human Resources Manager SpeedDee Delivery	Julie Schmitz Director of Human Resources Viking Coca Cola	
Renee Hendricks Olson Executive Director Child Care Choices	Janet Goligowski Division Director Stearns County Human Services	
John Herges President/ CEO Falcon Bank	Linda Yozamp, Manager DEED, Job Service MN WorkForce Center - St. Cloud	
Cris Budzynski Training & Development Manager Gold'n Plump		

Joint Powers Board

The Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council (Joint Powers Board) is created by agreement of the Boards of Commissioners of Stearns and Benton Counties. This agreement creates a governmental unit called a Workforce Service Area (WSA). The Joint Powers Board has the fiduciary responsibility for the WSA. Membership on the Joint Powers Board includes two Benton County Commissioners, two Stearns County Commissioners, and a member of the Stearns-Benton Workforce Council.

James J. McMahon Sr., Chairperson
Benton County Commissioner

Mark Sakry, Vice Chairperson
Stearns County Commissioner

DeWayne F. Mareck
Stearns County Commissioner

Spencer Buerkle
Benton County Commissioner

Jill Magelssen
Stearns-Benton Workforce Council

WorkForce Center – St. Cloud

The WorkForce Center can help with:

Information about:

- Tax credit, labor law, and other employment issues.
- The labor market for business planning.
- Employment resources and issues available on-line or at a free Resource Room with computers and printed materials.

Current employees by:

- Determining the skills needed to do the job.
- Assessing current employee abilities related to those needed skills.
- Bringing in other community resources to build your training program.
- Helping employees transition in the event of a lay-off.
- Offering Workforce “U” services. We can package these services alone or with those of a post-secondary institution in a Job Skills Partnership grant for a company or several employers as a group.

New Hires by:

- Working with employers to ensure readiness for the workplace by offering Workforce “U” services to workers seeking employment in this area’s strategic industries.
- Applying for foreign labor certification, receiving federal bonding insurance for an employee.

Emerging Workers by:

- Teaching youth (age 14 – 21) about work.
- Providing intensive summer programming that, in partnership with parents, increases youth preparedness for school and work.
- Providing labor market information to schools.
- Assisting adults who may not have been in the labor force previously to prepare for employment.
- Obtaining training to prepare them for their job goal including post-secondary stipends.

Immigrants by:

- Working with area employers/employees, educators, and community organizations to prepare immigrants and English language learners with the occupational English skills needed to maximize productivity and safety.

Underemployed by:

- Assisting employers in hiring people with disabilities who may not have been employed or fully employed previously but who have valuable talent and productivity to contribute.
- Assisting individuals in exploring job change to further develop and use their talent for full employment.

Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council (SBETC), a partner in the WorkForce Center

What We Do

The goal of the Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council (SBETC) Joint Powers Board and the Stearns-Benton Workforce Council is to help our community to meet the workforce needs of businesses and job seekers now and in the future. We work with many community partners (employers, citizens, government, economic development agencies, social service agencies, educational institutions and others) to identify and address employment needs of business and job seekers.

Who We Are

The Stearns-Benton Workforce Council, comprised of 27 members, the voting majority of whom are from the private sector, provides support and direction to the workforce development system in this two County area.

The SBETC Joint Powers Board, comprised of five members, four of whom are County Commissioners, creates a two County unit of local government. This unit of government, called a Workforce Service Area, receives federal and state funding to support defined services to employers and job seekers. The fifth member of this Board is a member of the Workforce Council so as to ensure coordination and a shared vision and mission.

The Minnesota WorkForce Center – St. Cloud is the site of services provided by local and state government to employers and job seekers. Organizations co-located in the Workforce Center in St. Cloud include SBETC, Job Service, Rehabilitation Services, Services for the Blind, and a division of Stearns County Human Services.

How We Can Help

The Council and Board support the strategic industries and occupations identified in the Partners of Strategic Growth Regional Assessment of 2002 and Reassessment of 2008. These are:

- Business Services
- Engineering & Management Services
- Health Services
- Printing & Publishing
- Wholesale Trade
- Manufacturing

The Council and Board also support the 7 Forms of Capital (Council on Competitiveness) highlighted at the Summits:

<u>Physical</u>	<u>Social</u>
Natural Endowments	Institutional
Infrastructure	Human
Financial	Cultural
	Knowledge

The services provided by SBETC reflect the work we do to support the strategic industries and occupations and are outlined in this report.

Training and Placements by SBETC

During the period 1 July 2008 – 30 June 2009, 79% of placements of individuals participating in Dislocated Worker, Workforce Investment Act Adult and Workforce Investment Act Youth programs were placed in the strategic industries at an average wage of \$17.19 per hour. Of 139 individuals placed in these industries, 7 began work in engineering/management at an average wage of \$31.24 per hour; 30 in manufacturing at an average wage of \$17.29 per hour; 38 in health services at an average wage of \$17.28 per hour; 15 in wholesale trades at an average wage of \$17.86 per hour; 3 in printing & publishing at an average wage of \$11.63 per hour; and 46 in business services at an average wage of \$15.06 per hour. The allocation of dollars for Dislocated Worker participants, who received training in these strategic industries for long-term training or on-the-job training, represented 85% of the funding.

For the same period, 202 public assistance clients (MFIP//DWP) were placed in strategic industries. Of these, one individual was placed in engineering/management at \$9.00 per hour; 47 in manufacturing at an average wage of \$9.92 per hour; 25 were placed in health services at an average of \$10.90 per hour; 10 were placed in wholesale trade at an average wage of \$10.03 per hour; 3 were placed in printing/publishing at an average wage of \$10.42 per hour; and 116 were placed in business services at an average hourly wage of \$9.41 per hour. A total of 6 individuals were trained in the strategic industries.

Workforce “U”

The purpose of “Workforce U” is to meet the workforce needs of business and job seekers, building prosperity by *acquiring, advancing and transferring skills in strategic industries*. This locally-developed and trademarked model was piloted in October 2005. The Stearns Benton Workforce Council, working with strategic industry employers, identified a service delivery mechanism and skill certification program for these industries, which is Workforce “U”.

Workforce “U” classes are offered in all regionally strategic industries—health services, printing and publishing, manufacturing, engineering and management services, wholesale trade, and business services. Students receive the opportunity to investigate the career pathway of one of these strategic industries to determine if it is suitable and if the student jobseeker can meet employer needs and expectations.

Introductory Workforce “U” classes provide a very thorough assessment of interests, skills, aptitudes, assets/strengths, work history, education, training, personality type, values and WorkKeys assessments in reading, math and locating information. With this comprehensive assessment information and under the guidance of a skilled Career Planner, the student completes a Personal Profile identifying which of the strategic industries or other high-growth/high wage/demand industries with career laddering occupations s/he wishes to pursue. The student then moves into a more in-depth career exploration of the six strategic industries which provides an opportunity to see, interact with employers, and try hands-on projects within the selected industry. The goal is that the student will have good understanding of the industry and that career goal is a good match for both job seeker and future employer.

Additional Workforce “U” classes provide for both short and long-term training in these industries as dictated by the Individual Service Strategy plan for each job seeker. Courses are offered at 100, 200, 300, 400 and 500 levels. Classes at the 400 and 500 levels are offered in partnership with St. Cloud Technical College, St. Cloud State University, and other colleges/universities. Each course has employer-identified prerequisites, purposes, outcomes, competency standards and measurements. At each level soft skills determined of most value to prospective employers are required to be demonstrated and documented. Credentials are documented at each level as well, providing student job seeker and prospective employer verification of skills attained.

Workforce “U” provides a framework and a common language that is understood by employers and student job seekers: the language of skills. Through its uniquely designed partnerships with employers and its professional, challenging and collegiate-style training, Workforce “U” is setting the standard for preparing Central Minnesota jobseekers for employment.

Fundamental classes of Workforce “U” include Career Launch, Career Navigation, Career Trek, Career tools and Career Voyage. A more complete description of these classes is available at SBETC. In addition, a unique monthly seminar is offered through Workforce “U” called “Breakfast with the B.E.S.T.”. These training sessions feature dynamic presentations by choice local business leaders on relevant topics designed to assist businesses to remain on the cutting edge of change and innovation. Revenues from this monthly activity support other Workforce “U” offerings.

Occupational English

The Board and Council support the goal of maximizing all available labor, including the skills and talents of individuals in our area for whom English is a second language. SBETC received funding to continue to partner with Gold’n Plump to provide continuous improvement/lean and occupational ESL training to employees.

Other Initiatives

- ♦ **Community/Capacity Building**
 - ✓ **Partners for Strategic Growth**
The Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development (DEED) provided a F.I.R.S.T. grant to complete a Community Reassessment http://www.workforceu.com/pdfs/2008_community_assessment_summary.pdf and to begin the process of developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.
 - ✓ **Membership in the St. Cloud Area Economic Development Partnership**
Xcel Energy has sponsored SBETC’s membership on the Board of this organization so as to coordinate regional workforce development and economic development activities. This continues.
 - ✓ **Workforce “U” Evaluation**
In Spring 2007, SBETC received pilot funding from the Minnesota Legislature to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of the Workforce “U” model. SBETC completed its second year of this project.

- ♦ **Healthcare**
 - ✓ **Central Minnesota Healthcare Academies and Nursing Assistant Training**
SBETC continued its work in developing and administering Healthcare Career Exploration Academies which provided an opportunity for interested individuals to explore careers in healthcare and assess if it is a suitable career choice. Thirty-four individuals completed the Healthcare Academy. Twenty-five completed the Nursing Assistant Class with an additional nine students enrolled for the July course. This training was funded in part by the Department of Labor and in partnership with Workforce Development Inc., Riverland Community College and St. Cloud Technical College.
 - ✓ **English Language Learner Certified Nursing Assistant and other Healthcare-related Training**
This training assisted individuals with English as their second language to become Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) or to increase their skills and knowledge through training in other related healthcare areas. The goal was to help employers address the large demand for skilled workers in healthcare-related jobs by assisting English language learners to become qualified to work in healthcare occupations. Host sites for this training included Sauk Rapids/St. Cloud. Seven students successfully completed this training. This activity was funded through a Jobs Skills Partnership Grant through DEED administered by Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council. With the assistance of interpreters, SBETC also provided CPR / First Aid training for ten individuals and food safety training for twenty-seven English language learners.

Partners in these projects included SBETC, District 742 Adult Basic Education, Sauk Rapids/Rice Adult Basic Education, St. Cloud Technical College, Good Shepherd Community, Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, and Central MN Council on Aging.

- ♦ **Manufacturing, Wholesale, Trade, and Printing & Publishing**

SBETC received a \$24,000 grant in March 2008 to provide another class at Gold'N Plump Poultry in Occupational English and Principles of Continuous improvement. 16 participants graduated from the class in April 2009.

- ♦ **Incentive Grant**

Based on performance measures, SBETC received incentive funds to support the work of the Board and Council.

Workforce Investment Act ~ Adult Program

This program funds services to the general public through a state-of-the-art Resource Area jointly funded and staffed with Job Service, State Services for the Blind and Rehabilitation Services. Services include information and referral, computer-based career exploration and assessment, and internet-based statewide and national job listings. Additionally, eligibility-based intensive and training services provide unemployed and underemployed participants the opportunity to develop job search, literacy, and occupational skills needed to obtain and retain employment and to increase their earnings in targeted industries and high wage, high demand occupations.

SBETC received a WIA Special Allocation, which funded the delivery of Career Outreach Services to universal customers off site of the WorkForce Center including many Great River Regional Library branch offices and human services organizations in Stearns and Benton Counties. A series of six career exploration and job search workshops were delivered as well as individual consultations, community presentations, sharing of community resources and making referrals for needed services.

WIA Adult Performance Results: Served 45			
Factor	Negotiated Performance Rate	Actual*	% of Negotiated Performance Rate
Entered employment rate (Of those whose cases are closed, how many were working at that time.)	86%	100%	116.3%
Retention rate at six months (Of those working, how many were still employed six months after closure per state wage detail records.)	82%	100%	122%
Earnings at six months (Of those working, how much more were they earning after the program)	\$14,089	\$12,497	88.7%
Average Hourly Wage at Placement		\$21.72	
Credential (Of those in training, the % who were employed and received a credential. Performance statewide is low in this area.)	66%	100%	151.5%

Dislocated Worker

These services are provided to job seekers who have been permanently laid off from their previous employment and are unlikely to return to their previous occupation. The goal of the program is to return these valuable employees to the workforce as soon as possible and at an average of 85% of their previous wage. Training is provided to those needing to upgrade skills or retrain to be able to secure replacement employment. Funding is provided through federal and state formula allocations as well as special project grants for large layoffs. Program objectives include placement, retention in the job, increased wage gain, and acquisition of certified occupational skills. In addition, a dislocated Worker project was received in the amount of \$308,000 to serve 70 workers for the time period of 1 July 2008 – 30 June 2009. A request to extend the project to 30 June 2010 was approved in May of 2009.

WIA Dislocated Worker Performance Results: Served 151			
Factor	Negotiated Performance Rate	Actual	% of Negotiated Performance Rate
Entered Employment Rate	86%	90.9%	105.7%
Retention Rate at Six Months	90%	97.5%	108.3%
Average Earnings	\$12,988	\$15,376	118.4%
Average Hourly Wage at Placement		\$14.60	
Credential	62%	71.4%	115.2%

State Dislocated Worker Performance Results: Served 427			
Factor	Negotiated Performance Rate	Actual	% of Negotiated Performance Rate
Entered Employment Rate	86%	86.3%	100.4%
Retention Rate at Six Months	90%	90.6%	100.7%
Average Earnings	\$12,988	\$15,897	122.4%
Average Hourly Wage at Placement		\$16.49	
Credential	62%	76.6%	123.5%

Dislocated Worker and Adult, Federal Stimulus (ARRA) Funds

Funds were received to provide for credentialed training, including "stackable credentials" for both dislocated workers and low income unemployed or underemployed individuals. The goal is to increase accesses for these individuals to education and training opportunities in regionally identified demand occupation skill training. WIA Adult Stimulus funds target low income individuals including MFIP and DWP participants and referrals from MOU/Community Partners working with low-income adults.

MN Careers

Stimulus funds in the amount of \$1,106 were received to provide additional materials for the WorkForce Center Resource Area and Classes for universal customers.

Youth Programs

These eligibility-based programs target youth age 14-21 and are federally (Workforce Investment Act) and state (Minnesota Youth Program, Youthbuild) funded. While performance outcomes vary, all youth programs are designed with a full range of youth development needs in mind. A Youth Council, required specifically by the Workforce Investment Act, advises on all SBETC youth programming. Youth not meeting eligibility for federal and state funded services are able to access the universal services available to all customers of the WorkForce Center.

- ◆ **Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth**

This is a long-term investment program with specific objectives for Younger Youth (age 14-18) and Older Youth (age 19-21.) Special focus is on dropout, low-income, out-of-school, youth aging out of foster care, and other eligible youth at risk. An assessment of each youth leads to the development of an individual service strategy designed around a full-service menu of ten essential programming elements provided directly or through accessing services of local partners. WIA funds cover training and support needs. A unique program feature is a very strong follow-up and retention focus with post-closure service as intensive as during program enrollment.

Younger Youth goals focus on skill attainment in the areas of basic skills; work readiness and/or occupational skills; obtaining a high school diploma or equivalency; and retention in post secondary education, training, employment, apprenticeships, or military service.

Program objectives for Older Youth are: obtaining and retaining employment, increasing earnings, and acquiring skill credentials which are identical to WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker objectives, although at different outcome rates.

Younger Youth (14-18 years of age) 4/01/2008- 3/31/2009: Served 8			
Factor	Negotiated Performance Rate	Actual	% of Negotiated Performance Rate
Attainment of basic skills, work readiness, and/or occupational skills	90%	100%	111.1%
Attainment of secondary school diploma or equivalent	76%	80%	105.3%
Placement and retention in post-secondary education or advanced training, military, employment, or qualified apprenticeship opportunities	73%	100%	137%

Older Youth (19 – 21 years of age) 4/01/2008-3/31/2009: Served 23			
Factor	Negotiated Performance Rate	Actual	% of Negotiate Performance Rate
Entry into unsubsidized employment	79%	100%	126.6%
Six months retention in unsubsidized employment	83%	100%	120.5%
Earnings change at six months	\$3,500	\$2,658	361.7%
Attainment of educational or occupational skills credentials by participants who enter unsubsidized employment or by youth who enter post-secondary education or advanced training	55%	66.7%	121.2%

◆ **Minnesota Youth Program**

The Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) provides funds to serve youth age 14 to 21. SBETC chooses to use the funds during the summer months in the delivery of Camp Challenge. Camp Challenge, a unique summer day camp, is designed to build social capital in our area youth, particularly at-risk youth ages 14-17. Thirty two youth in teams of eight, under the supervision of a caring and dedicated educator, planned and delivered community service projects. During this sixteen day contextual learning experience on the campus of St. Cloud State University, youth focus on the development of employability skills, career exploration and improvement of reading and math skills. A generous \$1,000 donation from the St. Cloud Optimist Club provided youth with the opportunity to experience a day of training focused on positive choices, responsible decisions and self-respect. Youth completing Camp Challenge receive a stipend and a bonus for meeting employability skills and safety goals.

During the summer of 2009, 32 youth spent 16 days of camp at St. Cloud State University and delivered several community service projects. During the youth's participation, they were rewarded by earning a daily stipend for demonstrating appropriate work behaviors. Those who demonstrated employability skills of 95% and safety at 100% earned bonuses.

MYP Performance Results: Summer Program 2009					
Youth served*	32	Youth with a disability	19	Juvenile Offenders	6

◆ **Youthbuild**

Youthbuild is a state funded program targeted at high school dropouts. The Youth Build Program is operated in collaboration with St. Cloud Area Schools, District 742 Area Learning Center and Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity. Participants focus on completing High School while working part time on a Habitat for Humanity Housing Project. Youth learn basic safety and construction skills while improving the availability of low-income housing in the community.

Youthbuild Performance Results: 7/01/2008 - 3/30/2009				
Youth served*	Goal	20	Actual	37

◆ **Outreach to Schools**

The Stearns Benton Youth Council received \$10,000 in "Outreach to School" funds. These funds were administered in partnership with Job Service to fund student interns in seven area high schools.

◆ **Youth Incentive Funds**

Five scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each were awarded to youth entering training for high-demand occupations in the fall of 2009 at St. Cloud Technical College (SCTC). These individuals were former foster care or youth aging out of foster care or first time (both parents and siblings have not graduated from post secondary school) post secondary attendee in family. Eligible programs were those identified as targeted industry occupations offered at St. Cloud Technical College which had a 95% placement rate or better for the 2006-2007 academic year. The scholarships were administered by SCTC Foundation.

◆ **Federal Stimulus-Funded (ARRA) Youth Programs**

CareerONE

ARRA funds allowed 192 eligible youth and young adults ages 14 – 24 to participate in CareerONE, a sixteen day Learning While You Earn work readiness skills training program provided in the context of Workforce "U". CareerONE provided youth the opportunity to demonstrate competency in attendance and punctuality, team work and cooperation, work quality and work quantity, and on-the-job safety. Career exploration and planning along with reality budgeting was also provided. The youth provided 5,100 work hours to eighteen local community partner agencies.

◆ **CareerTWO**

A second program, Career TWO, continued similar programming for fifteen youth who had completed CareerONE, providing an additional 3,000 work hours to the community.

Public Assistance Programs

Stearns and Benton Counties contract with SBETC for their Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), Diversionary Work (DWP) and Food Support Employment and Training (FSET) programs.

◆ **Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)**

MFIP is a program for low-income families in Minnesota. The overall goals of MFIP are to encourage and enable all families to find employment, to help families increase their income, and to prevent long-term dependence on welfare as a primary source of family income. Training is limited, with a “work first” emphasis. MFIP job seekers are limited to five years (60 months) of financial assistance in a lifetime, requiring SBETC, the job seeker, and many other community agencies to coordinate service to ensure that these job seekers close their MFIP case before their months of eligibility are exhausted. SBETC Career planners and job seekers work together to develop and implement a plan for employment. Along with career counseling, SBETC provides assessment of a job seeker’s strengths and barriers and coordinates support service to overcome barriers and develop job search skills.

MFIP Performance Results: 1/1/08 – 12/31/08	
Factor	Actual
Enrollment – Referred by Counties	1082
Terminations	546
Entered Employment-Off MFIP	208
Average Hourly Wage at Placement	\$9.39

Does not include recipients who moved off of MFIP due to other household income, relocation, receipt of Social Security or children leaving the household.

◆ **Diversionary Work Program (DWP)**

DWP is a four-month program that provides services and supports to eligible families to help them move immediately to work rather than go on welfare. The four months of DWP do not count towards the 60 month lifetime limit for MFIP. Stearns and Benton Counties contract with SBETC to provide job seekers with career assessment and career counseling to divert them from MFIP.

DWP Performance Results: 1/1/08 – 12/31/08	
Factor	Actual
Enrollment – Referred by Counties	631
Terminations	495
Entered Employment	184
Average Hourly Wage at Placement	\$9.61

Includes recipients who moved off of DWP due to medical restrictions, relocation, or children leaving the household.

◆ **Food Support Employment & and Training (FSET)**

These job seekers are able-bodied adults without dependents. In order to receive benefits, job seekers are required to work with SBETC career planners to develop and implement an Employment Plan. The goal of assisting these individuals is to increase income so that they are no longer in need of the assistance.

FSET Performance Results: 10/1/08 – 9/30/09	
Factor	Actual
Enrollment – Referred by Counties	106
Successful Exits	29
Entered Employment	9
Average Hourly Wage at Placement	\$8.54

These results include recipients who left FSET due to relocation and eligibility for other programs (GA, DWP or MFIP).

◆ **Paid Work Experience (PWE) July 2008 – June 2009)**

Paid work Experience provides MFIP clients the opportunity to be placed at host sites and be paid to work. In Stearns County, 93 individuals were enrolled in PWE and earned a total of \$194,396.00. In Benton County, 18 individuals were enrolled in PWE and earned a total of \$57,238.00. This opportunity improves the skills of the participants and gives them a higher likelihood of being hired in the open market.

SBETC Financial Information

July 2008 to June 2009

Total Job Training Funds	\$ 4,002,041.00
Workforce Investment Act (WIA-Federal Funds)	\$1,042,120.00
WIA – Adult	\$ 174,059.00
WIA – Youth	\$ 294,119.00
WIA – Dislocated Worker	\$ 325,727.00
5% Incentive	\$ 9,589.00
WIA Youth Incentive	\$5,560.00
Harken Special Allotment	\$57,220.00
Career Youth – Ambassador Outreach to Schools	\$ 10,000.00
FIRST Grant	\$38,901.00
ETC/ABE/WFC Grant	\$24,140.00
Project Gate II	\$909.00
Coleman-Stearns Mfg Project	\$101,563.00
Coleman-Stearns ERAG	\$333.00
Federal Stimulus (ARRA) Funds	\$168,357.00
WIA – Adult ARRA	\$233.00
WIA – Youth ARRA	\$119,028.00
WIA – Dislocated Worker ARRA	\$47,990.00
MN Careers ARRA	\$1106.00
<i>ARRA funding is from February 17, 2009 and ends on June 30, 2010</i>	
State Funds	\$2,633,898.00
Minnesota Youth Program	\$142,949.00
MFIP – Minnesota Family Investment Program (County Contracts)	\$ 949,651.00
DWP – Diversionary Work Program (County Contracts)	\$235,520.00
Supported Work	\$87,304.00
FSET – Food Support Employment & Training (County Contracts)	\$ 40,839.00
Integrated Services Project	\$79.00
WorkForce "U" Project	\$449,467.00
State Dislocated Worker Program	\$ 652,210.00
Minnesota Youthbuild Program	\$ 72,000.00
MN UI Funding	\$3,505.00
MN Careers – Resource Room Materials	\$374.00
Other Funds	\$157,666.00
Breakfast with the BEST	\$3,471.00
JSP ELL/CNA	\$944.00
Stearns and Benton County Administrative Subsidy	\$128,928.00
Riverland Community College	\$15,027.00
Apprenticeship	\$ 7,738.00
General Revenue	\$1,016.00
Reserve Accounts	\$11.00
Benefits Reserve	\$ 531.00

The figures do not reflect the grant totals for multi-year funding. The actual dollars spent are reflected for the multi-year grants.

Minnesota Job Service, a partner in the WorkForce Center

Job Service was established by the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 to provide a nationwide system of public employment offices that have provided high quality business and job seeker services for over seventy years. In 1998, Job Service was designated as a foundational partner in the One-Stop delivery system of workforce services by the enactment of the Workforce Investment Act. Job Service is the labor exchange system that provides employers with an effective method of recruiting potential employees and by offering a listing of job vacancies to job seekers on a no-fee basis to all Minnesotans. Job Service is funded by the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA).

Customers

Job Service assists both businesses and job seekers with business as the primary customer as the program focuses its' services to increase business assistance. WorkForce Center partner agencies offering employment and training services rely on the Job Service labor exchange system known as MinnesotaWorks to help their program participants find employment.

Business Services

Job Service has adopted a demand driven approach by building relationships with business decision makers, assessing the needs of businesses and facilitating a coordinated response of the providers of business solutions. Services to businesses include:

- locate resources to meet the needs of the business
- arrange for service providers to present business solutions
- list job vacancies to recruit new employees
- federal bonding insurance
- provide labor market information for business planning
- hiring tax information
- job analysis of essential job skills needed for occupational success through WorkKeys (ACT, Inc.)
- foreign labor certification
- labor law resources
- seminars on business topics
- referral of qualified applicants
- JOBZ and business financing information

Job Seeker Services

Job Service provides job preparation and job placement assistance to job seekers that include:

- top rated job search workshops to develop successful job search strategies and skills
- career exploration workshops and testing
- resource areas with computer internet access and printed materials
- employment counseling and skill assessment
- special efforts to work with veterans, youth, migrant workers, dislocated workers and persons with disabilities.
- providing labor market data
- reemployment assistance to individuals receiving unemployment insurance
- referrals to job openings
- referrals to community resources
- testing for specific jobs
- National Work Readiness Credential assessment
- WorkKeys work readiness credential and skill assessment tests

MinnesotaWorks.net

MinnesotaWorks, maintained by Job Service staff, is an internet-based, statewide labor exchange system that links employers and job seekers with the largest employment data base in Minnesota.

Employers search the state's largest labor pool of resumes for potential employees, are able to create job vacancy listings that are searchable by job seekers and use the special features of MinnesotaWorks to meet their recruitment needs. Job Service staff assists employers to set up their business account to use MinnesotaWorks on a self-service basis or employers may have Job Service staff enter their job opening information on MinnesotaWorks.

Job seekers are able to search job vacancy listings and their online resumes are viewable by employers. Job Service staff will also refer qualified persons to job vacancies.

MinnesotaWorks is available for all employers and job seekers to use on a NO FEE basis. MinnesotaWorks continues to be a very useful tool for employers to recruit new employees as shown in the following data as of November 1, 2009:

Statewide

Total resumes: 237,694 as of November 1, 2009

Total job seeker records: 497,705

48% - Greater Minnesota

52% - Twin Cities Metro

Total employer records: 74,349

Minnesotans of all age groups use MinnesotaWorks.net:

Ages 17-22:	19 %
Ages 23-34:	33 %
Ages 35-50:	31 %
Age 51 and over:	15 %

Race of users:

American Indian:	4%
Asian:	4%
Black/African American:	11%
White:	81%
Hispanic/Latino:	3.9%

Education level of users:

High school/GED:	38.5%
Some college:	22.3%
College degree:	39.2%

Employment status:

Currently employed:	32%
Received separation notice:	39.2%
Unemployed:	65%

Job openings:

49% Greater Minnesota
51% Twin Cities Metro

Small to Medium Businesses Post a Significant Number of Openings:

0-49 employees	62%
50-249 employees	25%
250-1000+	13%

Job Openings by Occupational Categories:

ONET Classification	% of Openings
Production, Installation & Maintenance	27%
Management, Business & Financial	12%
Office & Administrative Support	11%
Science, Technology, Engineering & Math	10%
Sales & Related	8%
Construction, Extraction & Transportation	8%

Employers appreciate MinnesotaWorks.net. Nearly 96 percent of employers surveyed would recommend MinnesotaWorks.net to a colleague who needs to post a job. Nearly 90 percent of those surveyed are satisfied or more than satisfied with the resumes they view on MinnesotaWorks.net.

For Stearns and Benton Counties, the Minnesota Job Service partner consistently ranks high in the comparison of the number of job openings listed on MinnesotaWorks to the number of new hires reported by Minnesota businesses.

Program Services:

First Source Employment Referral Agreements:

The Minnesota Omnibus Jobs bill requires employers to list their job vacancies with Minnesota Job Service if the employer has received a grant or loan in excess of \$200,000 from the state. New job openings are listed on MinnesotaWorks and this agreement covers a two year period. Minnesota Job Service staff are responsible to contact these employers, post their job openings and complete the First Source State Contract form.

Veteran Programs:

Veteran programs provide business services to employers and specialized employment and training services to veterans. The customers are Minnesota businesses and the 408,468 veterans in Minnesota of which 14,843 live in Stearns and Benton Counties. The Jobs for Veterans Act, signed by President Bush on November 7, 2002, defines Veterans Priority for services at the Minnesota WorkForce Center.

Services provided to veterans include:

- assisting businesses to access resources
- case management for disabled veterans
- assistance with resumes, cover letters, and applications
- provide labor market information
- eligibility determination for special programs
- information on veteran benefits, rights, and preference hiring
- referrals to job openings
- referrals to local, state and federal supportive services

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)/North America Free Trade Act (NAFTA) Program:

The TAA and NAFTA programs assist workers who have lost their jobs due to increased imports or foreign competition to re-enter the workforce. Services include job training, job search allowances, relocation allowances and cash benefits paid to eligible persons after they have exhausted their UI benefit payments. Other benefits include Health Coverage Tax Credit which is financial assistance for health insurance premiums and Alternate Trade Adjustment which is a benefit for eligible workers who are over 50 years old.

Performance Results-Statewide for FFY 2008 (October 1, 2007 - September 30, 2008):

Number of workers receiving basic TAA/TRA weekly benefits: 1,261
Number of workers enrolled in training: 540

Student Ambassadors:

Job Service continues to coordinate the "Outreach to Schools" program which assists emerging workers in area high schools. Nine "Student Ambassadors" were hired to work on site during the 2008-2009 school year at the following area high schools:

Albany	Sartell	Holdingford
Cold Spring - Rocori	Sauk Rapids-Rice	West Central ALC
Foley	St. Cloud Apollo	
St. Cloud Technical		

The student ambassadors are local college students in their junior or senior year. The purpose of their placement in the high schools is to have direct contact with the students to assist them in their post secondary planning. This is accomplished through one-on-one interaction or group presentations with the students to show them the resources available to make prepared, confident and informed decisions affecting their post secondary future. This includes explaining the services available at Minnesota WorkForce Center.

During the 2008-2009 school year, the seven student ambassadors made 5,078 contacts with the high school students working a total of 2,828.25 hours (average of 12 hours per week). The total cost per service provided was \$4.46 per contact.

Prior to their placement at the high school, each student ambassador is required to complete a training program with Minnesota Job Service staff. There is extensive instruction about the WorkForce Center web site which they emphasize for the students to use to access labor market data, links to career and college information, and MinnesotaWorks. Additionally, the student ambassadors will utilize the school resources to enhance student knowledge and understanding of career counseling services.

The "Outreach to Schools" student ambassador program has been beneficial for both the students and faculty. As a high school counselor stated: "This internship is a valuable resource for our school and students. To have an extra person to help out with students makes a large difference. It would be a shame if the program was discontinued. There would be many students that would not get the help they need and deserve." A student from Apollo High School stated: "Thank you so much for helping me set some goals in my life."

Foreign Labor Certification:

The Foreign Labor program enables United States employers to hire foreign workers on a permanent or temporary basis. Certification includes verifying that there are no qualified U.S. workers available and willing to accept the job at the prevailing wage.

Performance Statewide

	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>
Number of prevailing wage determinations issued	1,107	1,197
Number of H-2B applications received	97	83

Federal Bonding Insurance:

The Federal Bonding program provides employers with insurance to indemnify the prospective employee against loss of money or property. Individuals need to meet specific criteria for eligibility. Bonds amounts may range from \$5,000-\$25,000 and are for a duration of six months.

Performance Results-Nationwide:

Number of Federal Bonds issued: 40,000
Number of bondees that prove to be honest employees: 99%

Labor Market Information (LMI):

Labor market information is valuable data to employers and job seekers regarding the economy and the employment picture. Employers are able to access information to assist them in business planning. Job seekers use labor market data to make informed career and job decisions.

This information is available on the Minnesota WorkForce Center web site which is maintained by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). Publications can also be ordered through DEED.

Information includes:

Salary/Benefit Data	Job Vacancy Survey
MN Economic Trends	Consumer Price Index
Minnesota Careers 2008	Job Outlook Data
Affirmative Action Data	MN Workforce Facts
Unemployment rates on a local, regional, statewide and national basis	

Job Analysis/WorkKeys:

Job analysis services are provided to determine the essential functions of a job position enabling the employee to be successful in the job. This knowledge of the required skills of a job provides the employee with valuable information to be able to plan to improve their skills for successful job performance and for future promotions and an accurate description of the job duties. Employers may use the job analysis information to develop individual employee training plans, determine performance goals for the positions and use as the criteria when hiring individuals for the various company job positions that have had a job analysis job profile completed. WorkKeys, which was developed by ACT, is the job analysis system that is used by trained job profilers on the Job Service staff. This is the only fee-based service.

Job Skills Analysis Business Benefits:

- Improves employee selection and advancement, and retention procedures
- Reduces overtime and turnover
- Increases productivity
- Targets training for specific work-required skills
- Builds more effective work teams
- Enhances EEOC and ADA compliant selection and promotion
- Sets competency guideposts for succession planning and career pathing

National Work Readiness Credential:

The National Work Readiness Credential is a certification of work readiness for entry level work as defined by employers. It is a national, standards-based assessment for entry level workers which provides a universal, transferable, national standard for work readiness. The assessment is delivered via a secure web based system that can be completed in approximately 2.5 hours. The assessment includes four modules – situational judgment, oral language, reading with understanding, and using math to solve problems.

Workshops for Job Seekers:

Job Service offers various workshops to assist job seekers in their job search. Workshops are taught by certified Job Service staff facilitators. Topic areas include:

Creative Job Search	Career Exploration	WorkForce Center Orientation
Resumes/Applications	Hidden Job Market	Linked In/Social Networking
Resume Lab	Skills ID	
Interview Class	The Next Move	
Interview Lab	Critique Hour	
Over 40 – Make It Count	Portfolio Development	

Outside experts teach two workshops on site: Financial Workshop Exploring Self-Employment

All workshops are offered at no cost to the job seekers.

St. Cloud Area Job Fair 2008

The 12th Annual St. Cloud Area Job Fair was held on September 16, 2008. We had 74 employers and approximately 1,500 job seekers attending the event. The job fair was sponsored by MN WorkForce Center/Job Service, St. Cloud Area Economic Development Partnership, St. Cloud Times, and St. Cloud Technical College.

Job Service Employer Committee (JSEC):

The Job Service Employer Committee is a group of local employers who establish and maintain a working relationship between Minnesota WorkForce Center/Job Service staff and the employer community. Their purpose is to improve services to employers and the community-at-large by providing customer feedback. JSEC members work with Job Service staff to shape the services to meet the business needs of local employers. JSEC sponsors seminars for area employers at no cost.

Minnesota Job Service provides all of the services listed and has staff who are knowledgeable about providing the services needed by employers and job seekers.

Business Services, a partner in the WorkForce Center

Business Services staff provide business solutions to the business community. The Business Services staff visit businesses that are identified in the Stearns-Benton Workforce Council's Local Unified Plan as well as businesses who request service. The mission is to help businesses identify those concerns that negatively impact their viability, profitability, or business growth and to make appropriate referrals to help address those needs.

The summary below gives a brief overview of the contacts that have been made from July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009 in Workforce Service Area 17:

From July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009, 4 Business Services Specialists conducted 268 consultations with businesses in Stearns and Benton Counties. The Business Services field staff submitted summaries of their business consultations in an online customer relationship management (CRM) database. The consultation format collects only top line data about business needs and the subsequent referrals and/or actions taken to address those needs. Locally, Business Services actions and referrals are often customized for individual business situations; therefore, all work done will not appear in this summary.

Consultations Overview

- Total business consultations conducted: 268
- Total number of individual business establishments visited: 145 of the 268 consultations
- Many businesses reported multiple needs on multiple visits.
- Based on the identified needs or requests, the field staff took actions to solve the issues directly or make referrals to a network government units/individuals and/or outside partners. More than one referral was provided to some businesses.

General Business Assistance

- 31 or 21% of businesses consulted reported this area as an issue during at least one visit, which includes assistance on business start-up, marketing, expansion, taxes, labor market conditions, etc.
- Most frequently cited referrals made/actions taken included:
 - Connecting to local resources such as the Central Minnesota Initiative Foundation and an area MnSCU partner
 - Providing Guide to Start Business in Minnesota or other information resources
 - Referring to the local BCD Representative

Hiring/Recruitment

- 73 or 50% of businesses consulted reported this as an issue during at least one visit.
- Most frequently cited referrals made/actions taken included:
 - Providing MinnesotaWorks training
 - Assisting in posting a MinnesotaWorks Job order
 - Consulting on job requirements
 - Providing a custom recruitment plan
 - Referring to Post-Secondary Placement Officers with the MnSCU system or the University of Minnesota

General Human Resource Administration Assistance

- 32 or 22% of businesses consulted reported this as an issue during at least one visit.
- Most frequently cited referrals made/actions taken included:
 - Advising and answering basic questions such as legal interview questions and minimum wage laws
 - Referring to Small Business Development Council
 - Providing DEED publications
 - Providing Employment Law Issues handbook
 - Referring to Minnesota Dept. of Labor and Industry

Training

- 17 or 12% of businesses consulted reported this as an issue during at least one visit.
- Most frequently cited referrals made/actions taken included:
 - Consulting on or assisting in developing a training plan with an outside provider¹²
 - MnSCU Customized Training
 - Consulting on an internal training plan
 - Minnesota Technology Inc
 - WorkForce Center partner discussions

State Services for the Blind, a partner in the WorkForce Center

State Services for the Blind (SSB), a partner in the Minnesota WorkForce Center system, is a branch of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. Its purpose is to foster the achievement of vocational and personal independence by persons who are blind, visually impaired or DeafBlind. This is accomplished by providing a variety of services:

- The Workforce Development Unit provides vocational services to transitional age (14 and up) youth and job seeking adults. Services include vocational counseling, adjustment to blindness training, vocational training, and job placement, among others.
- SSB self-sufficiency services for adults not seeking competitive employment can include rehabilitation counseling, training in daily living skills, referral and advocacy, and other services that promote the goal of independent living.

Our "Communication Center " Unit offers blind, visually impaired, DeafBlind and persons with physical limitations or a learning disability access to the printed word through the Radio Talking Book, Dial-in News and Braille and Audio Transcriptions services.

Blindness or visual impairment should not impede a person's success at a job, training, or other activities that reflect one's interests and enjoyment of life. In St. Cloud, as in all of Minnesota, State Services for the Blind assists Minnesotans to regain self-confidence and independence. State Services for the Blind generally serves from 50 to 60 vocational and 250 Senior Services participants out of the WorkForce Center.

Rehabilitation Services, a partner in the WorkForce Center

Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) is a part of the State-Federal Vocational Rehabilitation service delivery, a branch of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) as well as a partner in the Minnesota WorkForce Center System.

In 2005 the Minnesota Rehabilitation Services (VRS) Program made some changes that impacted VRS's service delivery methods. These changes are outlined below:

All individuals who express an interest in VRS are given an orientation about what services VRS offers.

VRS now offers two levels, or tiers, of services. The first tier, which people with disabilities can access without application or eligibility determinations for VRS, is called Core Services. In Core Services people can participate in services including consultation with VRS staff and the referral to other community resources. In addition, they can participate in classes offered in the WorkForce Center, the Resource Room where they can find labor market information and job leads they may participate in workshops covering a variety of job search topics, and can participate in job clubs offered at the WorkForce Centers.

The second tier or Intensive Services, of VRS is for enrolled individuals/clients whose goal is obtain competitive employment. We support employment plans that are expected to result in clients working up to their capacity as determined by their skills, strengths, work history, informed choice and impact of their disability. We assist clients to take small steps towards working to their capacity.

Individuals must apply for Intensive Services and be found eligible for these services. Our eligibility criteria are:

- The person has an impairment and
- The person's impairment poses a substantial impediment to their preparing for, obtaining, and performing/maintaining employment and
- The person requires VRS Services in order to be employed and
- The person has the ability to benefit from VRS to achieve an employment outcome of substantial employment (the person is maximizing their work effort to their tolerance level.)

Some people who apply for our services do not have a substantial impediment to employment resulting from their impairment.

Some people who apply for VRS can accomplish their vocational goal without VRS intervention because they are eligible for another funding source that is adequate to meet their employment needs and/or they have resources to connect them with appropriate services. People on waivers and who have County Social Workers could be considered to not require VRS. When VRS counselors are determining whether or not a person requires services, the purchaser of anticipated services is not the only factor. If a counselor determines that the person also requires services such as counseling and advocacy services for adjusting to disability, determining accommodations, or identifying resources and coordinating services, the individual may require VRS.

There are some people who do not have the ability to achieve an employment outcome in the community.

People who are on Social Security benefits are presumed eligible for intensive services, but VRS will not write an employment plan with them if there is not a required role for VRS to perform in order for the person to achieve their employment goals.

After eligibility for Intensive Services is determined, the person's priority for services is considered. VRS has four priority categories. People in the first three priority categories are presently being served.

VRS is placing a greater emphasis on frequent contact with clients. Qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors will be available to our clients throughout the service delivery process. The Rehabilitation staff will assist clients with writing and implementing effective employment plans, with preparing for employment, and with assisting the client with maintaining employment.

As of April 2005, Rehabilitation Services Administration regulations require that anyone on Social Security, who has a Ticket to Work, assign their Ticket to VRS when they write an employment plan with VRS. Assigning their Ticket to VRS, or any other employment network, means people plan to work towards earning enough money to get off Social Security benefits. The clients can work gradually towards this goal.

The St. Cloud VRS office has hired a job placement staff to assist our clients with contacting employers and developing good job matches. VRS added a Business Service Specialist to meet business needs related to disability issues and to assist with capitalizing on the efforts of the WorkForce Centers' other Business Service Specialists.

VRS in FY 07 hired a Rehab Technician and an employment counselor. These positions provide support to Rehabilitation Counselors and Job Placement staff throughout the service delivery process. They work with VRS clients on various activities such as practicing job seeking skills, looking for job leads, and providing on-the-job support. The design of these positions is very flexible to allow the adaptation to meet client and VRS team needs. VRS St. Cloud currently has one Rehab Technician and one Employment Counselor on the team.

The VRS objective is to offer service delivery options that meet the employment related needs of people with disabilities. Fast, responsive information and referral service to people through core services, and deliberate, relationship-oriented services through intensive services for people who require VRS assistance.

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In FY 2009, St. Cloud VRS added a Rehabilitation Counseling Supervisor 2. The position provides operational, training and other staff support designed to enhance service delivery to consumers and communication with various community partners.

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