

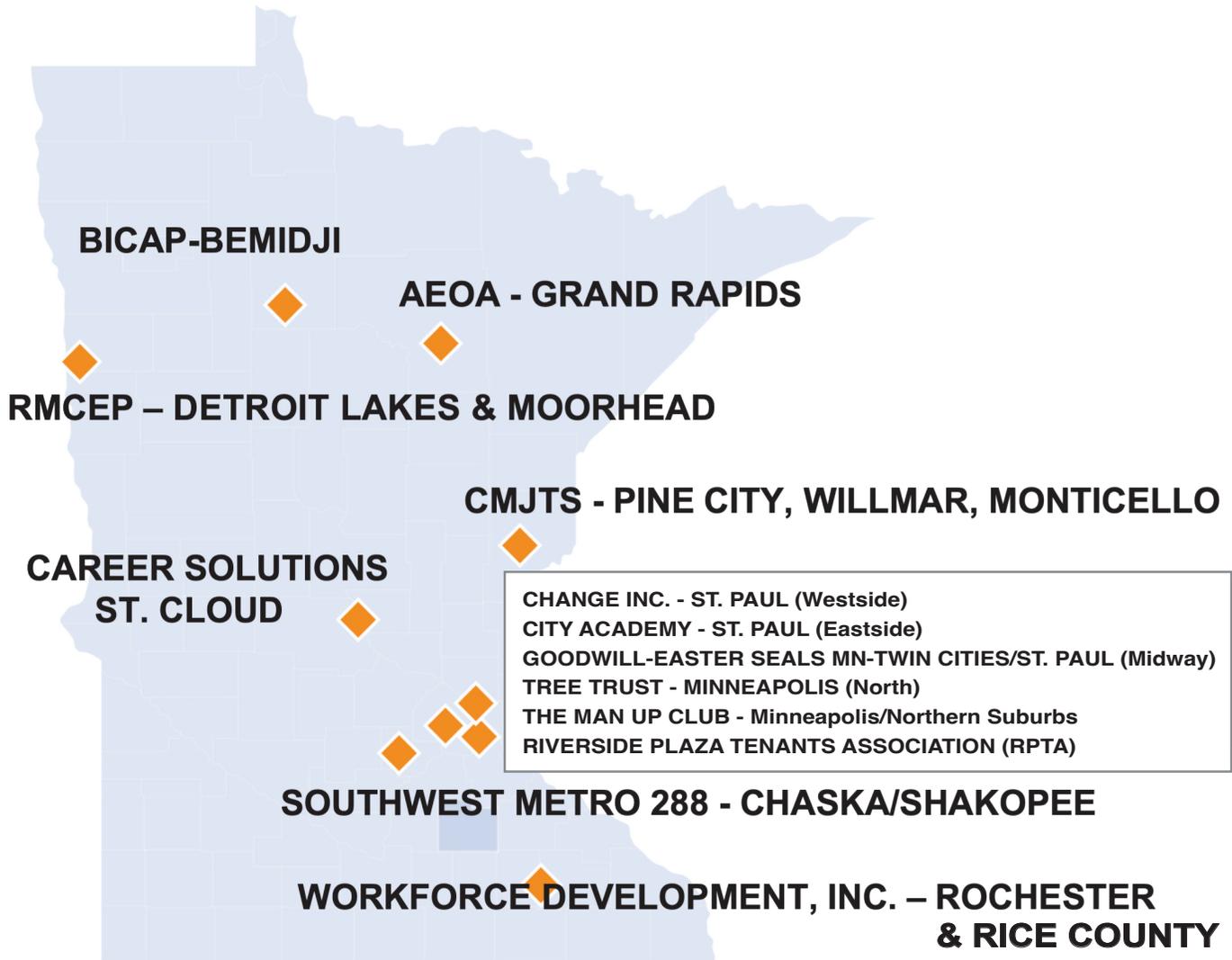
MINNESOTA YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM

PREPARING AT-RISK YOUTH
FOR A PRODUCTIVE FUTURE





MINNESOTA YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM LOCATIONS



MINNESOTA

YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM

SFY2025 Annual Report

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FUNDING

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025, \$2,093,000 in state funds served 597 at-risk youth in 14 Minnesota Youthbuild programs in the state. Fifty-three (53) units of affordable housing, 37 storage sheds and other structures were constructed benefitting low-income communities. Youthbuild was first authorized in statute by the Minnesota Legislature in 1989, **M.S. 116L.361 – 116L.366**.

The 2023 Legislature appropriated \$2,093,000 each year of the SFY 2024-2025 biennium to expand existing programs and to add new programs and service areas. DEED conducted a competitive RFP funding process in 2024. Community reviewers recommended four new projects for funding. These included Goodwill-Easter Seals of Minnesota, Riverside Plaza Tenants Association, and The Man Up Club serving youth primarily from Minneapolis, St. Paul, and the northern Twin Cities suburbs. Workforce Development, Inc. also received a grant to serve youth primarily from the cities of Faribault and Northfield in Rice County.

OPPORTUNITY YOUTH

Youthbuild targets youth who are at-risk of or have dropped out of high school and are economically disadvantaged, involved with the justice system, aging out of foster care, homeless, a teen parent, experiencing a disability and/or a basic skills deficiency, and/or have limited English ability. In SFY 2025, three quarters of youth were from BIPOC communities, and the majority of youth had two or more significant barriers.

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Youthbuild offers high demand/high wage career pathways through:

- ▶ Approximately 500 hours of basic carpentry training while building affordable housing or other structures benefitting the community; OSHA 10/30, S/P2, and First Aid/CPR certification.
- ▶ Industry-recognized Multi-Core Craft Curriculum (MC3), Home Builders Institute Pre-Apprenticeship Training (HBI PACT), National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), Forklift Operator, Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), Auto Repair, Welding, Mental Health, Personal Care Attendant (PCA) and Nursing Assistant (CNA) occupational credentials.
- ▶ Career exploration, guidance, mentoring, case management, and support services.
- ▶ Contextual basic skills, construction math, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters (NCSRCC) *Career Connections*, post-secondary credit in CareerONE/TWO construction curricula.
- ▶ Work readiness skills emphasizing a strong work ethic, safety, and daily on-time attendance, leadership, community service, independent living skills, entrepreneurial and financial literacy.

INNOVATION

Construction Plus: Youthbuild offers additional career pathways in health care, arborist tree care, auto mechanics, welding, and manufacturing.

Host Big Ideas Mobile Learning Lab: Several Youthbuild programs hosted the Big Ideas Mobile Learning Lab, which uses a fully immersive virtual reality system to explore of a variety of trades in an interactive setting. Through augmented simulators and headsets, youth interactively explored welding, industrial painting, HVAC, plumbing and CAT excavator trades and explored over 20 other trades, including warehouse crane operations and auto mechanics.





COMMUNITY SERVICE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Youthbuild emphasizes giving back to the community through volunteer service and helping those in need. This year, Youthbuilders built a tiny house that is now on the Leech Lake Reservation, a playhouse for the Eastside YMCA Childcare Center, two mobile farmers markets, new food shelf storage, and volunteered at two *United Way Day of Action* events, building three decks, painting a shed for the local post office, building a kiosk, cleaning up two residential properties, and clearing walking trails. Youthbuilders also built Dodge Nature Center intern housing, storage sheds, low income senior wheelchair ramps, and distributed and planted 100 trees.

BUILDING TRADES PARTNERSHIPS, REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, AND CONSTRUCTION JOBS

Youthbuild’s collaboration with registered apprenticeship and local contractors is a “win-win” for Youthbuild graduates and Minnesota’s union building trades; youth gain access to highly paid construction employment and union contractors to meet their Minnesota Department of Human Rights Workforce Goals for women and people of color. In the past ten years, over one hundred Youthbuild graduates have been placed in construction employment with entry-level wages averaging over \$20 per hour.

YOUTHBUILD LEVERAGES \$6 MILLION IN FEDERAL RESOURCES

During the past biennium, state Youthbuild funds leveraged \$6 million in U.S. Department of Labor YouthBuild funds to serve youth in the Bemidji area, Itasca County, Minneapolis, and St. Paul.

YOUTHBUILD RETURN ON INVESTMENT

By targeting economically disadvantaged youth, teen parents, young people involved in the justice system, and other at-risk youth, Youthbuild’s Return-on-Investment (ROI) demonstrates significant taxpayer cost savings through the program’s success in placing youth in high-wage careers, adding to the state’s tax base. It also saves money through reduced crime and need for income support programs for individuals who enroll and graduate from the Youthbuild program. Youthbuild also benefits Minnesota communities by expanding affordable housing, reducing youth crime and homelessness, and building engaged young citizens who volunteer and give back to their communities. Information on Youthbuild’s ROI can be found at: mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/youth-programs/youthbuild.jsp

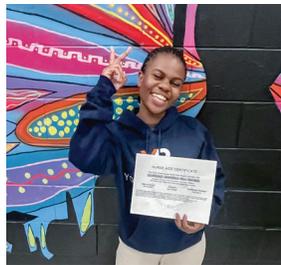


Photo captions (left to right): 1. Eli using a circular saw at an affordable housing site for GESMN and Habitat for Humanity. 2. Dorika celebrates earning her Certified Nursing Assistance certificate. 3. CMJTS Youthbuilders, Zane and Tim, building food shelf storage units. 4. GESMN Youthbuilders, JR and Chris, working at a Twin Cities for Habitat worksite.

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Serving Itasca County



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:29

Industry Recognized Occupational Credential Earned: ..28

Youth from Families Receiving Public Assistance:23

Placed in Construction or Manufacturing Employment: ..5



Photo caption: AEOA YouthBuilders framing interior walls.

COLLABORTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Itasca County Habitat for Humanity and Restore, District 318 – Area Learning Center, Northern Lights Charter School, Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (JET), Northern MN Builders Association (NMBA), Itasca County Probation, Ross Resources, and AEOA’s Adult Education and Transitional Housing.

BEST PRACTICES

Construction Career Pathways and Wraparound Support:

AEOA Youthbuild offers youth comprehensive construction skills training while they build and restore Habitat for Humanity homes for low-income families in Grand Rapids and surrounding communities. This year, AEOA Youthbuilders constructed the first net zero energy house for Itasca County Habitat for Humanity, in addition to working on three other Habitat for Humanity homes. In the classroom, youth work towards earning their diploma or GED and learn construction theory and work readiness skills which are then applied on construction sites. They also work closely with the Case Manager to resolve barriers, explore careers, and gain independent living skills and job placements. Two recent AEOA Youthbuild graduates are now working for Minnesota construction companies, one earning \$36 per hour as a union apprentice and the other working for a local construction company building log cabins and custom cabinets.

Leadership Development and Community Service Focus:

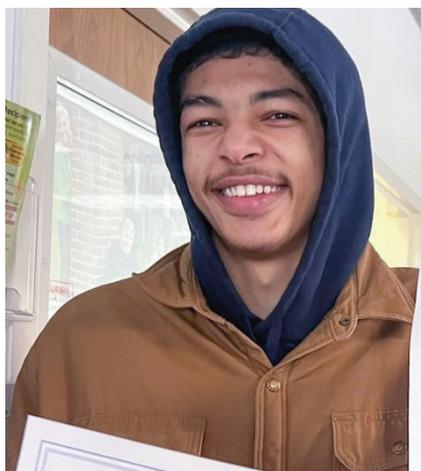
Youthbuilders volunteer on several local community projects, including those sponsored by the United Way’s Annual Day of Action. Volunteer work provides youth with a sense of community and social responsibility, encourages empathy, a deeper understanding of societal issues, and valuable teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills. It also promotes exploration of youths’ various interests, passions, and potential career paths and increases their sense of purpose, accomplishment, and mental well-being. Overall, AEOA Youthbuild volunteering contributes positively to society and plays a crucial role in the personal growth and development of the Youthbuild volunteers themselves.



Industry-Recognized Certifications Youth Earned: NCCER, OSHA 10, CPR/1st Aid, AED. In addition, 21 participants have earned their driver's license or permit, one has earned a reinstatement of their license, and 7 are studying for their permit. AEOA Youthbuild emphasizes to participants the importance of safe, responsible driving since most construction employers require workers to have a driver's license and reliable transportation to multiple worksites.

QUOTES:

- *"I didn't know what my place was in the world. I found a place at Youthbuild." - Youthbuild participant*
- *"Building for the community helps me build myself." - Youthbuild participant*
- *"It's a great place to start if you plan on going into a trade." - Youthbuild participant*



SUCCESS STORY: TERRANCE

When Terrance joined Youthbuild, he was overcoming significant barriers having experienced homelessness in South Dakota and dropping out of high school three years earlier with little motivation to return. After relocating to Itasca County and securing stable housing with support from the AEOA Youth Housing Program, he committed to the Youthbuild program and began building a new future. Through his time in Youthbuild, Terrance earned his GED, gained industry-recognized certifications including OSHA 10, NCCER construction credential, and First Aid/CPR, obtained his driver's license, and took on part-time work to support himself, ultimately saving enough to purchase a vehicle. His journey reflects the power of Youthbuild to create lasting change by empowering young people to achieve their goals and take control of their futures.

Photo caption: Terrance with NCCER construction credential

Since 1994, Arrowhead Youthbuild has constructed or rehabilitated over 85 affordable homes, three Head Start Centers, one project for domestic abuse survivors, four homeless residences, 16 raised garden beds and one Youthbuild workshop in Northeast Minnesota.



BI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS, INC. (BI-CAP)

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Serving Beltrami and Cass Counties



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:	38
Industry Recognized Credentials and Safety Certificates Earned:	58
Obtained High School Diploma/Equivalency or Continued School:	32
Youth from Families Receiving Public Assistance:	35
Basic Skills Deficient:	38
Justice System-Involved Youth:	14



Photo captions (left to right, top to bottom): 1. YouthBuilders hanging siding on an affordable housing project in Bemidji. 2. Setting trusses during the home build at 120 Gould Avenue. 3. BICAP YouthBuild participants and staff at the completed home's Open House before its sale.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Cass Lake-Bena School District, Cass County Adult Basic Education (ABE), CareerForce/Rural MN CEP, Bemidji State University, Northwest Technical and Leech Lake Tribal Colleges, Evergreen Youth and Family Services, United Way, Habitat for Humanity, Headwaters Regional Development Commission, Beltrami Human Services, and Department of Corrections.

BEST PRACTICES

YouthBuild Advisor Support

BI-CAP Youthbuild Advisors mentor participants throughout their entire time in the program; from orientation to resolve barriers, meeting one-on-one weekly to discuss goals and progress, providing college and career exploration and guidance, to teaching an employability skills and placement curriculum as well as work readiness and independent living skills. These wraparound staff supports lead to a high number of Youthbuild graduates who are employed in construction, manufacturing, and healthcare. Examples include a Youthbuild grad who recently completed a Heavy Equipment Operators course and a former Youthbuild Intern (interns assist the worksite trainers) who is attending Leech Lake Tribal College's Carpentry Program.

Industry-Recognized Occupational Credentials and Diploma/GED: Youthbuilders receive certification in NCCER (National Center for Construction Education and Research), OSHA 10, OSHA 30, First Aid/CPR, Certified Nursing Assistant, and/or Wildlife Firefighter.

QUOTES

- *Youthbuild was an amazing experience and a great opportunity. The staff are amazing and 100% supportive. The program is great for youth and deserves more recognition.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“Youthbuild has changed my life for the better in so many ways. I’ve graduated, gotten my driver’s license, made friends, gained confidence, valuable life skills, and a work ethic that will last my entire life. I shudder to think about what I would have done without this program.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“Great program! Life changing! Staff go above and beyond to help individuals succeed.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“This program was incredible! It gave me a chance at living a better life.” - Youthbuild participant*



- *“I’m so very grateful. I recommend this program and give it 10/10.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“I can honestly say, without the support and resources at Youthbuild, I would not be where I am today. I will always speak highly of Youthbuild.” - Youthbuild participant*



SUCCESS STORY: **TAYSHAUN**

Tayshaun immediately demonstrated a clear commitment to improving himself and his skills when he enrolled in Youthbuild. Through strong work ethic, drive, and continuous perfect attendance, he quickly earned his diploma, NCCER, OSHA 10 and 30, First Aid/CPR, and Rent-Wise certifications, and was voted President of the Policy Committee. He also earned his driver’s license and saved the money he earned in Youthbuild to buy a vehicle in order to secure an apprenticeship with the Construction Engineers Union.

Photo caption: Tayshaun at work

Since 1989, BI-CAP Youthbuild has constructed and rehabilitated over 27 single-family homes, two Head Start facilities, and helped maintain 11 transitional housing properties in the Bemidji area in addition to assisting in the construction of a 22-unit subdivision in the community of Blackduck.



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Serving Stearns and Benton Counties

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

CentraCare, YES Network, Roto Chopper, Louis Industries, Johnson Construction, Felling Trailer, Mortenson Construction, St. Cloud YMCA, Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters, Minneapolis St. Cloud Pipefitters Local Union 539, Stearns Bank, Alexandria Tech, St. Cloud Technical & Community College, and St. Cloud State University.

BEST PRACTICES

CareerONE and CareerTWO Programs Offer Post-Secondary Credits and Certifications in Construction, Healthcare, and Public Safety:

Youthbuild participants are exposed to high-growth, in-demand occupations through a career exploration curriculum and post-secondary courses at St. Cloud Technical and Community College which offer college credit and hands-on training. Youth in the Construction/ Manufacturing track earn college credits in the “Introduction to Construction” course and OSHA 10 certification. They are trained on CADD software and 3D printers and build sheds with trusses. Two days a week, they build affordable housing for Habitat for Humanity. Students worked on two different low income houses this year. One was being built in St. Cloud and the other in Sartell. Also, participants tour training centers for the Carpenters and Pipefitters unions. Youth in the Health Care track earn college credits in Certified Nursing Assistant Prep (HCCC or Health Core Curriculum) courses and CPR/First Aid. They also gain advanced skills and clinical experience and are prepared to take the CNA exam. In 2025, eight participants passed the exam and are now Certified Nursing Assistants. Youth in the Public Safety career pathway earn college-credit waiver at Alexandria Technical & Community College for completing the “Introduction to Criminal Justice” course and tour the St. Cloud Fire Department, Alexandria Police Department, and the public safety program facilities at Alexandria Technical & Community College.

QUOTES

➤ *“Youthbuild was an amazing experience and a great opportunity. The staff are amazing and 100% supportive. The program is great for youth and deserves more recognition.” – Youthbuild participant*



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served: 27

Youth earning Post-Secondary Credit: 27

BIPOC Youth At-Risk for Dropping Out of School: 23

Received a Certified Nursing Assistant Credential: 19



Photo caption (left to right): Issak, Ahmed, Muktar, Sanuel, Noah, Sumyo, Morgan, and Michael. Youthbuild participants from Career Solution’s CareerTWO program touring North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters Training Facility in St. Paul.



- *“Youthbuild has changed my life for the better in so many ways. I’ve graduated, gotten my driver’s license, made friends, gained confidence, valuable life skills, and a work ethic that will last my entire life. I shudder to think about what I would have done without this program.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“Great program! Life changing! Staff go above and beyond to help individuals succeed.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“This program was incredible! It gave me a chance at living a better life.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“I’m so very grateful. I recommend this program and give it 10/10.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“I can honestly say, without the support and resources at Youthbuild, I would not be where I am today. I will always speak highly of Youthbuild.” – Youthbuild participant*



SUCCESS STORY: **SUMEYA**

“I wasn’t really sure what I wanted to do with my summer. I wanted to do something meaningful that would help me grow, but I did not know what that would look like. That’s when I found out about CareerONE from my school counselor. This program gave me a real look at what it’s like to have a job. I learned how to be on-time, how to work with different people, and how to stay focused even when the day felt long. I also learned how to build a resume, and that’s something I’ve never done before. One of my favorite parts of CareerONE is how supportive and friendly everyone was. I was nervous at first, but I met people who were kind and encouraging and it made it easier to step out of my comfort zone. I now have the chance to join CareerTWO, where I’ll be getting my Certified Nursing Assistant certification. That’s a big deal to me because I have always wanted to work in health care and help others and now I am actually taking steps to do it. The program helped me to grow in confidence, responsibility, and direction. I am really grateful I joined and would tell anyone who’s thinking about it to give it a try. You might discover more about yourself than you expect.”

Photo caption: Sumeya

Since 2005, St. Cloud Youthbuild has constructed sheds, playhouses, raised garden beds and more than 60 homes with Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity for low-income families. This year’s builds include: homes in St. Cloud and Sartell, MN; a storage shed donated to Habitat for Humanity; and garden planters donated to local non-profits.



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Serving the City of St. Paul



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:	113
Recent Immigrant with Limited English Proficiency:.....	89
Youth from Families Receiving Public Assistance:	102
Received Industry Recognized Occupational Credential:	72

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Painter’s and Allied Trades Union #82, Roofers and Waterproofers Union Local #96, Youthbuild Global/ AmeriCorps, Floor Covers Union Local #68, Andersen Windows, U.S. Green Building Council, St. Paul Parks and Recreation, Dayton’s Bluff Housing Services, MSR Design, Intek Plastics, Metro State University, Sholom Community Alliance, and The Gardens at Episcopal Homes.

BEST PRACTICES

Affordable Housing Projects

Youthbuild participants continue to exceed expectations for constructing single-family homes on a nearly one-acre lot on Saint Paul’s West Side. The second home is ready to be sold as affordable housing under the guidance of a Youthbuild alum who is now a realtor. Both homes are *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design* (LEED) certified.

Occupational Industry-Recognized Credentials and Safety Certification:

Change Inc. Youthbuild participants earn credentials in Multi-Craft Core Curriculum construction curriculum or Certified Nursing Assistance, as well as certification or measurable skills gains in OSHA 10, First Aid/CPR, Community First Services and Supports, financial literacy, and Northstar Digital Literacy training. This year, Change Inc./GAP School students and staff in the healthcare track received the Community Partner Dream Maker Award to honor the significant difference their volunteer work in the community has made to the 300 people in 37 group homes served by Living Well Disability Services. Since 2022, students have volunteered with Living Well as part of their community service and career exploration activities while developing advocacy skills for people with disabilities.



QUOTES

- *“I liked this program, because it helps a lot of people from all different backgrounds. It felt like home. This program gave me another chance in life to gain my high school diploma, and not just a diploma, friends also. I’m super grateful for everything, forever this will be one of my best experiences.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“Over the past two years, we have had the privilege of hiring 10 students from GAP School [Youthbuild Plus healthcare training], seven of whom are still thriving as members of the Living Well team. Five students are also volunteering regularly with people in our homes, participating together in recreation activities and building rapport.” Nate Altman, Recruitment Manager at Living Well*



SUCCESS STORY: **DORIKA**

After moving to the United States from the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2024, Dorika enrolled in Change Inc.’s Youthbuild Healthcare Pathway program. Youthbuild staff helped Dorika obtain a higher wage job at a local assisted living home to help with her family expenses. Through hard work and dedication, Dorika passed the exam to become a Certified Nursing Aide (CNA) and was accepted into Allina Health’s Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program, where she was able to work full time, take online medical assistant certificate classes, and receive hands-on learning led by Allina Health nurses, all while being paid!

Photo caption: Dorika celebrates her newly awarded Nursing Aide Certification.

Since 1995, The Change Inc.’s Youthbuild program has constructed or rehabbed over 25 homes and placed 20 Youthbuild graduates as registered apprentices in Minnesota’s union building trades.



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Serving City of St. Paul - eastside



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:	66
Homeless or Runaway Youth:	12
Earned Diploma:	48
Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education:	44



Photo caption: City Academy participants, Nemeah and Anthony

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Dayton’s Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services, Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, Two Rivers Land Trust, Century and Saint Paul Colleges, Carpenters Local #322, St. Paul Parks and Recreation, University of Minnesota, Safeway Driving School, and Metro State University.

BEST PRACTICES

Youthbuild Seamlessly Integrated into High School Curriculum and School Activities

City Academy integrates occupational training, health and safety, career planning and exploration, personal finance, community leadership, work experience, and work preparation into its high school curriculum and activities. The charter school serves youth who have dropped out of school and have significant barriers to education and employment success. Despite barriers, Youthbuilders consistently earn their high school diploma and two or more industry-recognized certifications, such as OSHA10, Welding, Certified Nursing Assistant, and Forklift Operations. All youth earn their CPR certification. In 2025, 100% of participants exited with a diploma; 47% enrolled in college or earned college credit, and 67% were employed.

Youthbuild Offers At-Risk Youth Unique

Opportunities to enroll and participate in First Robotics, Small Engine Repair, AutoCAD Design and 3-D Printing, Landscaping and Gardening, Urban Agriculture, Beekeeping, and Solar Boat Construction training courses. Dual enrollment in College in the Schools (CIS), through the University of Minnesota, provides youth opportunities to earn post-secondary credits in Algebra, Statistics, Education, Writing, Creative Problem Solving, Family & Society, and Public Speaking. This year, Youthbuilders completed a tiny house, now located on the Leech Lake Reservation. The youth built the house from the ground up and recently installed the electrical, designed and installed corbels (using CNC software to create them), finished the custom ceiling and built a convertible couch that turns into a twin sized bed. Students in the AutoCAD class designed and 3D printed exterior lanterns for the tiny house. City Academy Youthbuild will begin construction on a new tiny house in the fall of 2025.



QUOTES

- *“Working with the students from City Academy was a pleasure. Their drive to learn and the enthusiasm they put into the work they did was a joy to experience while on site with them.” - Bryn Chambers, Habitat for Humanity*
- *“It was a rewarding experience that taught me a ton of lessons about construction and an overall good experience.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“I really enjoyed working on the tiny house. We are learning about the many different tools we can also use later on in life. I’ve been working on the house for about a year now, so seeing it finished really brings me joy. What I can say is, if you have the right people who want it, it’s gonna get done. Some days I thought it was not gonna look right but, with all the trim work, we did it and it looks amazing. I’m really grateful for all the information I got and used with and without the tiny house. It was a good experience that anyone would have.” - Youthbuild participant*



SUCCESS STORY: NEMEAH

An upcoming City Academy Youthbuild Graduate, Nemeah has enjoyed many opportunities available through Youthbuild. She has earned OSHA10, PCA, CPR, and Mandated Reporter certificates, successfully completed college-level classes through City Academy’s CIS program and PSEO opportunities. Always ready to jump into any new challenge and get dirty in construction, Nemeah is on her way to greatness.

Photo caption: Nemeah at work

Since 1993, City Academy Youthbuild has constructed or rehabilitated over 180 units of affordable housing, one tiny house, twelve garages, 25 farming sheds, one playhouse, 3 solar boats, 14 community gardens, two raised garden beds, and three hives housing over 90,000 bees. The new Youthbuild Training Facility, located on E. 7th Street near Arcade, is part of the Neighborhood Development Center (NDC) and Dayton’s Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services small business incubator project to promote BIPOC-owned small businesses. Homes built this year included two Habitat for Humanity homes in St. Paul and one in Roseville.



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*Serving Pine, Kanabec, Wright,
and Kandiyohi counties*



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:	37
Youth with a Disability:	25
Received Work Experience or Work Based Learning Opportunities:	37
Received Community Involvement or Leadership Development Activities:	37
Earned a Diploma, GED, or Returned to School:	34

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Legacy2Inspire, Monticello Turning Point and Ivan Sans ALCs, Buffalo School District-Phoenix ALP, Tera Nova School, Big Lake Connections, Wright Technical Center, Ridgewater College, Big Lake Food Shelf, Central Minnesota-East Adult Basic Education, IUOE Local 49, Minneapolis Electrical JATC, Monticello Help Center, local businesses and community agencies.

BEST PRACTICES

Legacy2Inspire:

CMJTS innovative partnership with non-profit Legacy2Inspire continues to expand to all “opportunity youth”. Legacy2Inspire focuses on mentoring and teaching youth construction and metal working skills via a mobile lab that creates a unique way to connect with youth, especially in rural areas. Legacy2Inspire’s mission aligns with CMJTS in that they both fundamentally believe that all youth deserve people in their lives advocating for them to find a productive and fulfilled life. “When youth and mentors come together and work side-by-side it creates a unique environment for learning, growth, and transformation. Shared experiences have an extraordinary power to unlock the potential in youth and foster personal growth. With the mobile workshop, we build relationships through the shared experience of building together,” states Legacy2Inspire staff. Their model is built around three core components: **Connect, Build Trust, and Mentor**.

QUOTES FROM YOUTHBUILD PARTICIPANTS

- *“I think the greatest part about Legacy2Inspire, and Jodi from CMJTS, of course, was just having a connection and having that bonding time with you guys and just having these open opportunities that I thought I would never be interested in in the beginning of probably junior year.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“Legacy 2 Inspire has taught me many things, like how to patch a hole in the wall or how to work with a team, things that anyone needs to know but they don’t teach in school, but they also taught me what good leadership is and how to make true relationships through teamwork and community.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“Jodi from CMJTS shows how much she cares about the students that she works with in every way possible, constantly going out of her way for the benefit of the students, she sees each person for who they are, Jodi has gone so far out of her way for me and I can’t thank her enough.” - Youthbuild participant*



SUCCESS STORY: ZANE

“My name is Zane. I’m 18 and a graduate of Phoenix ALP at Buffalo High School. I attended eight schools, from homeschooling to hands-on flight expos, before choosing Phoenix ALP in my junior year because alternative education best fit my learning style. I proudly earned my high school diploma in June 2025.

“When I learned about the Youthbuild program from Jodi, I was eager to join. Through Youthbuild and Legacy2Inspire, I gained lifelong skills, such as teamwork, using a tape measure and hand and electric tools, drywall, plumbing, electrical work, painting, project design, and giving back to my community. We built shelving for a food shelter, read blueprints for benches and chairs for Camp Courage and Camp Friendship, designed

and built the Care Closet at Buffalo High School for students’ basic needs, and helped with the Montrose food drive. My favorite project was redesigning and building a mobile food pantry for a non-profit.

“My favorite tool was the lathe, which I used to create a wooden sculpture. I became a student leader my second year. One of the best experiences was attending the Trades Camp. I was able to try welding, construction, automotive, and heavy equipment operation. After graduating, I started full-time, earning \$20 an hour, at NT Woodworks, a small contracting company that specializes in interior trim, railings, cabinet installation, and wood accent walls in Buffalo. Jodi and the Legacy2Inspire staff—Andy, Tim, Rachel, and Matt—were amazing mentors and showed me the importance of giving back to the community, teamwork, and loving what you do. The time I spent with them was truly priceless.”

Photo caption: Zane at work



Since 1996, CMJTS Youthbuild has constructed or rehabilitated over twelve homes in central Minnesota and has taken the lead in combating homelessness and hunger through the construction of tiny homes and mobile farmers markets.



GOODWILL-EASTER SEALS MINNESOTA (GESMN)

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Serving the Twin Cities Metro Area



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:48 served, 36 new enrollees

Students who Earned an Industry Recognized Certificate or Credential: 97%

Number of Volunteer Hours Completed by Students: 430+

Youth who Identify as Hispanic or People of Color: 94%

Youth disconnected from school for three or more years at intake: 44%



Photo caption: GESMN Youthbuilders, JR and Chris, working at a Twin Cities for Habitat worksite.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, Hennepin and Ramsey County probation, CareerForce Centers, Penn Foster, Carpenter’s Union, Electrical Association, local youth service organizations: SafeZone, YouthLink, YMCA, and local business partners: Twin City Framers, Service Restoration, Luther Hopkins Honda, Turbo Tim.

BEST PRACTICES

Rooted in Student Voice, Growing Toward the Future:

GESMN Youthbuild offers students agency in shaping their futures outside of the traditional school setting. Student choice includes their academic pathway (GED or High School Diploma), hands-on skilled training in automotive or construction, and developing leadership and career readiness skills aimed at preparing students for their futures and to be thoughtful citizens.

Industry-Recognized Certificates & Credentials:

GESMN Youthbuild students have the opportunity to earn a number of industry-recognized certificates and credentials including: Multi-Craft Core Curriculum, OSHA 10, MnDOT Flagger, Northstar Digital Literacy, First Aid/CPR/AED, ASE Entry-Level Maintenance and Light Repair, and S/P2 certifications in Automotive Service Safety, Lift Safety, Ethics and You, Pollution Prevention, Valvoline Chemicals 101, and Valvoline Fluids 101.

QUOTES

- *“I’m able to work at my own pace and enjoy the work compared to a regular school.”*
- Youthbuild participant
- *“Thanks for everything! I appreciate everyone’s help and all the staff, this program has definitely exceeded my expectations.”* - Youthbuild participant
- *“Thank you so much for teaching us and being understanding and caring.”* - Youthbuild participant
- *“Thanks for all you are staff are doing for [my son] and the other Youthbuild students. We haven’t seen [our son] this content/confident for a long time. He has loved this program so much. Thanks for your service to make a difference in many lives.”*
- Parent of a youthbuild participant



SUCCESS STORY: **MICHELLE**

Before coming to Youthbuild, Michelle was working in customer service. She felt overqualified and she wasn't being recognized for her work. Those feelings inspired her to seek out something more. She went home after one of her shifts, started looking up programs on the CareerForce website, and decided that Youthbuild would be a good fit for her. Michelle found quick success in the program, after just 3 months she had earned her GED and six Automotive certificates! She also volunteered in her community, participated in leadership development classes, and built lasting relationships with her peers and staff. When asked to reflect on her experience in Youthbuild, Michelle said she was "encouraged to overcome a lot!" She shared that staff helped her to realize, "there is so much more I can do." We're happy to report that Michelle also passed her Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Entry-Level exam in Maintenance and Light Repair and is now working full-time for the Minnesota Department of Human Services. When asked what she would say to a prospective student about the Youthbuild program, she said, "it's worth a shot!"



Photo caption: Michelle at work



Since 2016, GESMN Youthbuild (both state and federal funds) has constructed or rehabilitated over 30 affordable homes in partnership with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. Students have also constructed and donated garden sheds and bookshelves to local schools.



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Serving Clay and Becker County

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Detroit Lakes ALC, City of Detroit Lakes, Many Point Scout Camp, Moorhead Public Schools and ALC, Clay County HRA, West Central Regional Juvenile Center (WCRJC), Moorhead Adult Basic Education, M-State, Herdina Construction Trades Camp, Big Ideas, and Be More Colorful.

BEST PRACTICES

Herdina Construction Trades Camp - Moorhead

Youthbuilders get hands-on experience and classroom instruction in a variety of specialty occupations within the residential and commercial construction industry during Herdina Academy’s 2-week construction trades camp each June. Participants work side by side with contractors and industry professionals to learn the various occupations, tools, safety requirements and skills required in the construction trades. This year, three Youthbuild students completed the Herdina Academy for Construction Trades.

Moorhead Youthbuild Summary:

RMCEP-Moorhead Youthbuild participants earned Safety and Pollution Prevention (S/P2) safety certification and three earned their National Career Readiness Credential (NCRC). Youth work on repairing 15 units owned by Clay County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA). Repairs included drywall and wall texturing, painting, repairs to cabinets, window trim and sink drains, assembly of modular desks, and replacement of outlets, lights, gutters, suspended ceiling tiles, and smoke detectors. While working with RESTORE/Habitat for Humanity, the Youthbuild crew installed vinyl siding and trim, soffits and fascia, and assisted with the install of doors and windows. They also built eight picnic tables, five benches, and a display for kitchen cabinets, which included installing and bracing cabinet doors. Youth also received training at M-State – Moorhead in concrete and electrical work. RMCEP also began career exploration services this year at the West Central Regional Juvenile Center, with eleven taking part in multiple individual career advising meetings utilizing the MCIS system for career exploration and review of educational programs.

Youthbuild participants toured the M-State – Moorhead Auto Mechanics, Diesel Mechanics, Electrician and HVAC programs, the NDSCS – Fargo campus, Marvin Windows, attended job fairs, and completed resumes, cover letters,



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:	25
Youth with a Disability:	13
Youth Earning a SP/2 Safety Certificate:	24



MCIS and MN Works career assessments. Five students earned their high school diploma, one obtained their GED, two obtained employment, two completed training at Lynnes Welding Training, and one took part in a job shadow experience. Several participants completed FAFSA applications, with plans to continue to post-secondary education.

Detroit Lakes Youthbuild Summary:

RMCEP-Detroit Lakes Youthbuild participants earned their S/P2 safety certification and learned employability skills such as dependability, time management, teamwork, and organization. They built picnic tables, benches, and shelving, performed landscaping and tree removal, repaired bleacher benches and maintained park building for the City of Detroit Lakes, the local school district, and the Many Point Boy Scout Camp. This year, two participants obtained employment after exiting the Youthbuild program.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES AND COMMENTS:

Students attending the two-week Herdina Construction Camp describe it as intense and very positive. They were exposed to multiple aspects of construction, completed hands-on construction activities. The camp helped them identify career areas of interest, particularly areas they were not previously aware of.



SUCCESS STORY: AVA

Ava came to Youthbuild from the Moorhead Career Academy and has been a crew member since February 2024. Her career goal is to become a welder, and in the past year, she has been participating with the welding competition team at the Career Academy. She recently participated in the SkillsUSA welding competition in Wayzata, Minnesota, where she placed third in the competition out a large field of welders. She has worked hard to catch up on her schooling this past year and was slated to graduate from high school in May 2025. She is applying for an internship/ apprenticeship through the Pipefitters Union and exploring educational opportunities for welding certification if she is not selected for the apprenticeship. She is a remarkable young person that has a clear focus on her future.

Photo caption: Ava's entry for the Skills USA Welding competition, for which she took third place.

Since 1995, RMCEP Youthbuild has built 30 homes, two duplexes, completed repairs on 77 HRA apartments for low-income renters and 23 homes as affordable housing in the cities of Moorhead and Perham.



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Serving Minneapolis

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Sherman and Associates, Renovo, D & S Properties, Project Recovery Inc. Hennepin County Jails, Career Force Centers.

BEST PRACTICES

Hands-On Construction Training:

The Riverside Plaza Tenant Association (RPTA) Youthbuild program equips young people with valuable construction skills while they work toward completing their high school diploma or GED. The program blends academic learning with hands-on, industry-based training to prepare participants for future employment and lifelong success. Youthbuild emphasizes essential work readiness and soft skills, OSHA safety training, career exploration, and hands-on practical construction experience.

Students engage in small group discussions and coursework designed to strengthen collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities while encouraging the exploration of diverse perspectives. Individualized guidance, collaborative projects, and team-based learning help participants build confidence, resilience, and communication skills. The program fosters a supportive learning environment where students motivate one another and take pride in their progress.

Under the instruction of experienced trainers, students gain technical proficiency in construction and design, beginning with a strong foundation in carpentry and measurement techniques. They learn to accurately use tools such as tape measures, emphasizing precision, attention to detail, and problem-solving on every project. Through extensive hands-on practice, students become confident in measuring and cutting materials, aligning structures, and installing fixtures. They also learn to identify and correct common errors, such as accounting for irregular surfaces or material expansion. This attention to accuracy and craftsmanship prepares them to deliver professional-quality work and positions them for success in any skilled trade.

The 2025 summer Youthbuild cohort began at the end of June. After mastering basic carpentry principles, students constructed a garden shed—an immersive project that introduced them to core trade competencies including wall framing, roof construction, basic electrical wiring, insulation installation, and interior finishing with drywall. This project allowed participants to apply classroom concepts in a real-world setting, reinforcing both their technical and teamwork skills while sparking interest in pursuing careers within the construction industry.



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Total Youth Served:	22
Somali Youth Served:	17
Earned Diploma:	8
Earned OSHA 10 Certification:	11



QUOTES

- *“The hands-on experience I gained through OSHA training, and classroom experience inspired me to apply those skills in everyday situations—like repairing my garage door when it needed fixing.” - Youthbuild participant*
- *“I am a new immigrant to America I feel like I accomplished a lot within my one year that I have been here. I am confident I will have a bright future.” - Youthbuild participant*



SUCCESS STORY

One of RTPA’s male Youthbuild participants initially struggled with motivation and punctuality regarding OSHA training. He frequently called out and rescheduled sessions. While he expressed interest when the program was first introduced, his inconsistent attendance suggested otherwise. After a conversation where he shared that he had other priorities, we reassured him that we were here to provide support and guidance. A week later, he began attending the OSHA training consistently and shared his renewed interest in continuing with the program. Since then, he hasn’t missed a single class and has expressed enthusiasm about beginning the on-the-job training.

Photo caption: Youth participant

In SFY 2025, Riverside Plaza Youthbuild participants built a 8’ by 10’ storage shed at a location in Minneapolis. Participants built the subfloor, framed, roofed, insulated, installed electrical, and hung drywall on the shed.



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Serving Scott and Carver Counties



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Number of Youth Served:12

Number of Youth Earned OSHA 10 Certification:12

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Hennepin Technical College, Scott and Carver County Housing Authorities and CareerForce Centers, and local school districts.

BEST PRACTICES

Greater Depth of Hands-On Learning:

With lower student numbers, the Youthbuild crew examined several training components in greater detail, including Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), the Career Connections curriculum, and OSHA 10 and CPR/AED/First Aid certifications. Youth also were allowed greater independence, voice, and choice in the types of projects they engaged in. SouthWest Metro Youthbuild offered specialized career offerings and technical educational pathways for our learners, including a short basic electrical 120v/220v wiring lab and on-site Construction Material Management. Students also had the opportunity to gain STEM skills through digital hardware repair and Information Technology training.

QUOTES

- *"I am using my understanding of construction from my Youthbuild experience, and I am a team leader in my fall class." - Youthbuild participant*



SUCCESS STORY: **GABRIEL**

Gabriel, age 17, was referred by an instructor at Southwest Metro Co-op and participated in the 2025 Youthbuild program. He worked alongside other participants on a major cabin building project in partnership with Three Rivers Park District. When finished, these cabins will be available for park guests and will be housed at Carver Park Reserve in Victoria. The Youthbuild team also assisted in building a shed and small furniture projects during the summer.

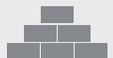
Gabriel is seeking a career in construction, working specifically in either a framing or brick masonry role. He mentioned the most challenging aspect of building was putting up the walls within these structures, but it was a good learning experience for him. Gabriel was recognized for his remarkable work ethic, eagerness to learn, and dedication to each task he was completing. He led by example, which greatly contributed to the overall success of the team. Gabriel also learned new skills at a fast pace and was a consistent performer on the worksite.

Gabriel noted that Youthbuild was a valuable experience for his preparation for a career in construction and appreciated the efforts of the Youthbuild instructor for his effective teaching style and patience. Gabriel is looking forward to potentially graduating in December of 2025 and beginning a career in the construction field soon after.



Photo caption: Gabriel at work

Since 1992, Southwest Metro Intermediate School District #288 Youthbuilders have constructed or renovated 35 affordable housing units; four units of a Juvenile Alternative facility and child care center; and a number of buildings, sheds, picnic tables, community gardens, and other building projects for local parks, social service agencies, family and senior centers (Auburn Manor and East Creek), the Chaska Fire Station, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Cedar Lake Farm, local public and alternative schools, and hospitals.



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Serving City of Minneapolis & St. Paul



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:	26
Unrepresented, At-Risk Black Youth:	25
Earned Industry Recognized OSHA 10/OSHA 30 certification:	17
Employed Graduates (3 earn \$27.50/hour average wage):	16

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

EDEN Resources, Kraus-Anderson Construction, Electrical Association, Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity

BEST PRACTICES

Projects & Partnerships - Catalyze Careers in Construction

Nearly 90% of Man Up Club Youthbuild Emerging Constructors (YBEC) participants earned OSHA-10 certificates in SFY 2025, two worked towards earning their OSHA-30, and a dozen YBEC participants earned a certificate of completion, entered an accelerated capstone project, and are currently interviewing for union construction and related employment with area businesses. Youthbuilders learned and earned while working on public housing in Minneapolis, a Habitat for Humanity home in St. Paul, as well as the design-build of picnic tables, donated to a local organization in need.

Placement in Living Wage Employment

YBEC graduates are now employed with local construction contractors and other employers and are earning living wages (\$25+ per hour and working fulltime). One graduate is now a framer for Twin City Framers, one was accepted into Local 563 Laborers union, another was recently hired by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and one is working for Boston Scientific in medical assembly. Several have graduated from high school and are seeking a union building trades career, construction employment, or are enrolled in post-secondary for advanced education and training. One graduate has his Fabrication and Welding Certificate, is working and continuing in post-secondary education.

Local Partnerships to Build Northside Neighborhoods

The Man Up Club Youthbuild crew worked with a commercial and residential flooring subcontractor to install more than 15,000 square feet of laminated vinyl tile plank in more than a dozen affordable homes and apartment units on Minneapolis' Northside this past spring. The work was a full-time, accelerated, temporary-seasonal endeavor which tested the will and skill of Youthbuild crew. Working alongside skilled tradespersons and their crew leader, participants learned the importance of showing up consistently early each day and doing quality work. As one crew member stated, "There are no short cuts, you must do the work properly, or you'll have to re-do it".



QUOTES

- *“I’ve learned about construction and a lot about myself. I’m happy to have graduated, completed the capstone requirements along with my resume. I am proactively looking for employment.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“I can’t imagine doing anything else; I love building.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“I am proud of myself for applying the skills learned in Youthbuild-Emerging Constructors.” – Youthbuild participant*



SUCCESS STORY: **TIJON**

With a natural talent and passion for carpentry, TiJon graduated YBEC and was hired at \$25/hour by Twin Cities Framers, a contracting firm building a large multi-unit housing complex in Andover, Minnesota. He shares that the physical and mental demands of the work are hard, but very rewarding. When asked, “What allows him to show up each day?” (which is a fundamental principle of The Man Up Club) TiJon shared...”*Mr. Dean, I love what I do, and I wouldn’t miss this opportunity to build this housing complex for the world.*”

Photo caption:TiJon is pictured back row, middle, at awards ceremony

In the past two years, The Man Up Club Youthbuild participants have rehabbed or constructed several single family homes, including a Habitat for Humanity home in St. Paul, installed 15,000 square feet of vinyl flooring to vacant apartments in Minneapolis public housing, and designed and built of picnic tables donated to a local organization in need.



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Serving City of Minneapolis



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Serve:	82
Youth with a Basic Skills Deficiency:	82
Youth with a Disability:	43
Enrolled in Union Finishing Trades	
Pre-Apprenticeship Summer Training Course:	5

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, Three Rivers Park District, Minneapolis and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Independent School District (ISD) #287, Paladin Career and Technical High School, PYC Arts and Technology High School, Transition Plus Minneapolis, Volunteers of America, Rainbow Tree Care, North Central Regional Carpenters Union, Urban Boat Builders, Bachman’s, Minneapolis Public Works, Ace Hardware, Menards, Career Pathways Public Charter Secondary School, City of Woodbury Public Works, and the City of Roseville.

BEST PRACTICES

Project-Based Learning

Tree Trust Youthbuild emphasizes project- and problem-based learning, equipping participants with valuable construction, tree care, and leadership skills. This training not only enriches their personal development but also benefits the community through building affordable homes and improving the urban tree canopy. In collaboration with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, participants gain hands-on experience in construction. In tree care, participants learn tree biology and tree identification techniques; learn the proper techniques to plant, prune, and fell trees; water and mulch; and complete introductory climbing arborist training. Trainees earn industry-recognized credentials that serve as building blocks for career advancement, including Home Builders Institute *Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training* (HBI PACT) credential, and the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) *Introduction to Arboriculture Safety Certificate*.

Leadership and Life Skills Development

Tree Trust’s Leadership and Life Skills training program includes extensive career and educational exploration, focusing on high-growth, in-demand career paths. The core curriculum components include Setting *SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely) Goals, Banking and Budgeting, Resume Writing, Interviewing Etiquette, Career Exploration and Workforce Development, and Civic Duty*. Tree Trust believes in presenting multiple pathways to success, ensuring that every young person can find a career that suits their interests and strengths. They actively promote skilled trade careers and other living-wage occupations that participants can pursue as an alternative to a four-year degree. Leadership development is a cornerstone of Tree Trust’s mission to transform lives and landscapes.



QUOTES

- *“I feel like I’ve changed because, before Tree Trust, I was less social and very stressed about my future and work but now, I feel confident and ready to face anything.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“I’ve grown more emotionally and matured throughout my time at Tree Trust. I learned responsibility, critical thinking, and resilience.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“My students love the program and the experience they get in it. They make huge academic and personal growth during their Tree Trust year.” – School partner*
- *“We have been partnering with Tree Trust for many years and our students have found incredible value in the program. They have grown, learned so many skills, earned certifications, and have become more job ready.” – School partner*



SUCCESS STORY: BECKETT

Tree Trust Youthbuild graduate, Beckett, completed his senior year of high school and expressed excitement about moving into a new career as a skilled trades professional. Like many Tree Trust Youthbuild participants, Beckett loved working with his hands. With the support of his Youthbuild trainers, he honed his skills both in construction and tree care and developed a robust resume of job site experience. Beckett reflected on his experiences, *“Don’t be scared to try new things. You never know what you’re going to like or enjoy the most.”* As Beckett celebrated his 18th birthday, he began his apprenticeship working as a glazier. Beckett was thrilled to move directly into the workforce after high school, and his family was impressed with his dedication and hard work, both at Tree Trust and in school. Beckett’s mom, Denise, expressed gratitude for her son’s opportunities to explore various career pathways in the Tree Trust YouthBuild program. She shared, *“The guidance and leadership that was given by the instructors was invaluable in helping him choose a path. The school and programs he participated in have made such a positive impact in his life!”*

Photo caption: Beckett

Since 2006, Tree Trust Youthbuild participants have rehabbed or constructed 101 single-family homes, 28 garages, four sheds, and four multi-unit apartments.



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Serving the Rice County (Faribault & Northfield)



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:	38
Youth with a Disability:	25
Received Work Experience or Work Based Learning Opportunities:	38
Received Community Involvement or Leadership Development Activities:	38
Earned a Diploma, GED, or Returned to School:	38

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS:

Faribault and Northfield Alternative Learning Centers (ALC), Habitat for Humanity, Healthy Community Initiative (HCI), South Central College

BEST PRACTICES

Basic Skills and the Work Environment

A top priority is making sure Youthbuild students begin the program by developing a solid foundation of basic carpentry skills, safety, and workplace expectations. At the beginning of each semester, instructors are diligent about teaching this base before any hands-on building takes place. Students are taught carpentry skills at a basic level to assure understanding of the necessary entry-level requirements. They learn how to use tools, knowledge of safety rules, and mastering basic measuring. Essential work skills and habits are developed from the outset, including promptness, proper work attire, positive attitude and communication with both co-workers and supervisors. Establishing knowledge and confidence in these areas early in the process allows for a much smoother transition into hands-on work so that Youthbuild students hit the ground running once an actual project begins.

Pride in the project and learning multiple facets:

With relatively small cohorts and building projects, Youthbuild instructors can foster a strong atmosphere of work ownership from the students. There is a clear sense of being part of a team, and instructors ensure students are meticulous and precise. A lack of professionalism, whether technical or behavioral, can have a negative effect on the entire project. Students are aware of this and take pride in doing things the right way because they are responsible the work being done. While students certainly possess strengths in various skills, learning all aspects in a construction project are emphasized. For example, if a student has strong roofing skills and perhaps even professional experience, they are required to learn other responsibilities such as installing a door or window. Experienced students are also encouraged to share their knowledge with other participants, which also contributes to the team environment.



QUOTES

- *“I became more confident and self-sufficient with power tools and this program gave me skills to last me a lifetime!”
– Youthbuild participant*
- *“This program gave me positive role models and helped me grow up a lot. We had fun while learning. I did things I never thought I could, and I got to work with people I’d never talked to before. We really came together as a team.”
– Youthbuild participant*
- *“The youth are very engaged and invested in the program and want to work. It has been great to see them gain skills and build positive relationships with each other, and our impact has also been great in the community.”
– Youthbuild instructor*

SUCCESS STORY: KEVIN

As a high school senior, Kevin joined the Youthbuild program knowing he enjoyed working with his hands and staying busy. He had a clear interest in construction, especially framing, but was unsure about his post-secondary options and wanted support exploring career pathways. Through Youthbuild, he gained hands-on experience across a variety of projects, which deepened his passion for construction and strengthened his skills. With guidance and encouragement, he decided to pursue further education after graduation. He enrolled at the local community college, where he earned his Associate of Applied Science degree in Carpentry. Today, he is employed with a local manufacturer, earning \$23.40 per hour and continuing to build his career with opportunities for advancement.



Photo caption: Youthbuild participant Kevin

Since 1997, Workforce Development Inc. Youthbuild has constructed or renovated about 30 houses in southeastern Minnesota, supported other non-profits in the community with ADA accessibility construction.



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Serving Rice County (Faribault & Northfield)



Youth Served At-a-Glance

Youth Served:	34
Youth with a Basic Skill Deficiency:	34
Earned a Diploma, GED, or Returned to School:	34
Placed in Employment:	23

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS:

Rochester Alternative Learning Center (ALC), Habitat for Humanity, Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC).

BEST PRACTICES

Basic Skills and the Work Environment

One of the priorities in educating Youthbuild students is making sure they start the program by creating a solid foundation of basic carpentry skills, safety, and workplace expectations. Instructors are diligent about teaching this base before any hands-on building takes place. Essential work skills and habits are developed from the outset, including promptness, proper work attire, positive attitude and communication with both co-workers and supervisors. Establishing knowledge and confidence in these areas early in the process allows Youthbuild students to hit the ground running once an actual project begins. At the beginning of each semester, students are taught carpentry skills at a basic level to assure understanding of the necessary entry-level requirements. Learning how to use tools, gaining knowledge of safety rules, and mastering basic measuring are examples of what is emphasized. Having these in place makes for a much smoother transition into hands-on work.

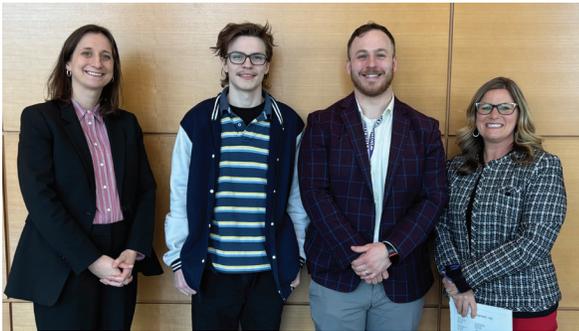
Pride in the project and learning multiple facets:

With relatively small cohorts and building projects, Youthbuild instructors are able to foster a strong atmosphere of work ownership in students. There is a clear sense of being part of a team, and instructors ensure students are meticulous and precise. A lack of professionalism, whether technical or behavioral, can have a negative effect on the entire project. Students are aware of this and take pride in doing things the right way because they are responsible for the work being done. They also learn all aspects in a construction project. For example, if a student has strong roofing skills and perhaps even professional experience, they are required to learn other responsibilities such as installing a door or window. Experienced students are also encouraged to share their knowledge with other participants, which also contributes to the team environment.



QUOTES

- *“This program made me learn how to better work on a team” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“I learned how to build and get creative with tools, and I got to do it alongside my friends while getting paid.” – Youthbuild participant*
- *“We have been fortunate to have some really great crews. I’m confident our students will go into the professional world with solid basic skills.” – Youthbuild instructor*



Pictured from left to right: Cate Duin, Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards Executive Director; Aiden, Youthbuild participant; Adam Bahr, Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) Youth Career Planner, Jinny Rietmann, WDI Executive Director testified at the Minnesota House and Senate in 2024.

SUCCESS STORY: AIDEN

When Aiden joined the program as a high school junior at the Rochester ALC, he already demonstrated a strong work ethic, persistence, and a friendly, willing-to-learn attitude. His career goal was to enter the trades, but he identified several barriers including limited knowledge about career pathways in the trades, transportation challenges, and managing a disability. Through the program, he was able to build both hard and soft skills essential for success in construction. Some of his favorite projects included building benches, sheds, and birdfeeders. He stepped into a leadership role as a foreman-like teacher’s aide, guiding and supporting his classmates, an experience that strengthened his leadership and confidence. He also shared his story and the impact of the program with Minnesota legislators earlier this year, stating that without this program, he would have felt lost and without direction or passion. Instead, he graduated with a clearer vision for his future. He earned his driver’s permit and is now working toward obtaining his full license. Since graduation, he has applied to join the Plumber and Pipefitter’s Union, interviewed for welding positions, and continues to build experience while working at a local garden store, earning \$17.25 per hour. He is actively applying for full-time employment as he awaits word on his union application. Most recently, he connected with a recruiter from a construction group and received encouraging outreach from an industry contact, further proof that his persistence and dedication are opening doors to new opportunities.

Since 1997, Workforce Development Inc. Youthbuild has constructed or renovated about 30 houses in southeastern Minnesota, supported other non-profits in the community with ADA accessibility construction.



MINNESOTA YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM DATA SUMMARY

(JULY 1, 2024 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2025)

COMBINED TOTALS		TOTALS	%	AEOA	Bi-CAP	Career Solutions	Change Inc.	City Academy	CMJTS	Goodwill Easter Seals of MN	
1.SFY 2025 Participants (in training or 12-month follow-up)		597		29	38	27	113	66	37	48	
Gender	2a. Male	383	64%	26	14	19	57	34	33	35	
	2b. Female	212	36%	3	24	8	55	32	4	13	
	2c. Non-binary	2	0%	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	
Age at Enrollment	3a. 16 - 17 Years of Age	280	47%	7	6	22	24	45	17	9	
	3b. 18 - 19 Years of Age	171	29%	19	14	4	10	18	20	14	
	3c. 20 - 21 Years of Age	79	13%	2	16	0	35	3	2	8	
	3d. 22- 24 Years of Age	71	12%	1	2	0	46	0	0	17	
Ethnicity / Race	4a. Hispanic/Latino	106	18%	2	0	2	22	10	10	19	
	4b. American Indian/Alaska Native	56	9%	6	28	0	0	3	0	9	
	4c. South and Southeast Asian	82	14%	0	0	0	46	21	6	1	
	4d. Black and African American	205	34%	3	0	22	35	35	4	17	
	4e. White (not Hispanic)	151	25%	18	6	4	3	8	27	4	
	4f. Two or More Races or Other/Prefer Not to Answer	67	11%	0	4	1	7	0	10	8	
Education at Enrollment	5a. 9th Grade - 12th Grade	587	98%	29	38	27	113	66	37	48	
	5b. High School Graduate	10	2%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	5c. Post-Secondary Education	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other Demographics	6. Not Employed at Enrollment	385	64%	29	28	12	69	66	2	27	
	7. Youth with a Disability	245	41%	13	7	5	6	21	37	42	
	8. Foster Youth or Aging Out of Foster Care	43	7%	9	12	0	1	3	1	7	
	9. Youth with Juvenile or Criminal Involvement	83	14%	15	14	0	4	6	2	19	
	10. Youth from Families Receiving Public Assistance	382	64%	23	35	9	102	61	9	28	
	11. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	45	8%	9	7	0	5	4	0	13	
	12. Basic Skills Deficient or Academically Delayed Youth	503	84%	29	38	27	89	66	36	44	
	13. Homeless or Runaway Youth	72	12%	5	12	0	2	12	2	17	
	14. Limited English Proficient Youth	132	22%	0	0	2	89	27	8	0	
	15. Economically Disadvantaged or Low Income Youth	461	77%	17	38	17	102	65	5	48	
	Program Activities	1. Received Education or Job Training Activities	571	96%	29	38	27	113	66	33	47
		2. Received Work Based Learning or Work Experience Activities	529	89%	29	38	17	113	66	37	20
		3. Received Community /Leadership Development Activities	514	86%	29	34	27	113	66	37	44
		4. Received Career Exploration Activities	531	89%	13	34	27	113	66	37	48
		5. Received Case Management /Mentoring Activities	566	95%	24	38	27	113	66	37	48
6. Received Support Services		487	82%	23	38	12	113	66	5	46	
Participant Performance Outcomes	1. Academic Credit Earned through Youthbuild	390	65%	15	37	12	112	66	26	0	
	2. Earned a Diploma, GED, or Continuing High School	552	93%	28	32	26	105	66	34	48	
	3. Occupational Credentials Earned, i.e. NCCER, HBI PACT, MC3, C.N.A., PCA, ASE, MNDOT Flagger	321	54%	28	35	19	72	48	2	58	
	4. OSHA 10, OSHA 30, S/P2, TCIA Safety, Mental Health First Aid, CPR, First Aid, Vulnerable Adult Mandated Reporter Certificates Earned	476	80%	29	23	27	61	95	2	77	
	5. Participants Who Exited Program	326	55%	15	25	0	46	48	21	31	
	6. Earned Diploma or GED	233	71%	15	18	0	46	48	19	24	
	7. Employment Placement	268	82%	12	13	11	73	31	28	26	
	8. College, Military or Advanced Occupational Training Placement	108	33%	0	4	27	9	44	4	1	
	9. Hourly Wage @ Employment Placement	254	\$18.31	\$17.82	\$16.00	\$21.00	\$18.97	\$18.10	\$17.48	\$17.63	
	10. Placed in Registered Apprenticeship, Construction, Finishing Trades PAT, or Career with Family-Sustaining Wages	44	13.5%	2	1	1	10	10	7	2	
	12. Hourly Wage @ Fulltime Construction/High Wage Skilled Placement	225	\$22.00	\$27.50	\$20.00	\$21.00	\$21.40	\$20.75	22.41	\$20.50	
	13. Unable to Obtain Education Outcomes (Moved, Etc.)	5	1%	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	
	14. Unable to Obtain Placement Outcomes (Moved, Etc.)	8	2%	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	
	Customer Satisfaction Survey	1. Participants Rating Youthbuild Excellent	170	56%	6	11	7	33	53	2	12
2. Participants Rating Youthbuild Very Good		113	37%	16	3	3	44	3	2	8	
3. Participants Rating Youthbuild Average		23	8%	1	0	2	10	0	0	0	
4. Participants Rating Youthbuild Below Average		0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
5. Participants Rating Youthbuild Poor		0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
6. Total Number of Surveys Completed		306	100%	23	14	12	87	56	4	20	
Housing and Construction Outcomes	1. Residential Housing Units Constructed or Renovated	53		2	2	0	2	6	0	5	
	2. Garages and Other Structures Constructed	37		5	2	1	6	5	4	0	

MINNESOTA YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM DATA SUMMARY

(JULY 1, 2024 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2025)

COMBINED TOTALS		TOTALS	%	Riverside Plaza Tenants Association	RMCEP	SouthWest Metro	The Man Up Club	Tree Trust	WDI Rochester	WDI Rice County	
1.SFY 2025 Participants (in training or 12-month follow-up)		597		22	25	12	26	82	34	38	
Gender	2a. Male	383	64%	20	19	7	22	63	5	29	
	2b. Female	212	36%	2	6	5	3	19	29	9	
	2c. Non-binary	2	0%	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	
Age at Enrollment	3a. 16 - 17 Years of Age	280	47%	17	13	9	11	37	30	33	
	3b. 18 - 19 Years of Age	171	29%	5	8	4	9	34	4	8	
	3c. 20 - 21 Years of Age	79	13%	0	0	0	4	9	0	0	
	3d. 22- 24 Years of Age	71	12%	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	
Ethnicity / Race	4a. Hispanic/Latino	106	18%	1	1	3	1	9	10	16	
	4b. American Indian/Alaska Native	56	9%	1	4	0	0	3	1	1	
	4c. South and Southeast Asian	82	14%	0	2	1	0	3	1	1	
	4d. Black and African American	205	34%	20	3	3	25	32	4	2	
	4e. White (not Hispanic)	151	25%	1	10	7	0	18	17	28	
	4f. Two or More Races or Other/Prefer Not to Answer	67	11%	0	2	1	0	17	11	6	
Education at Enrollment	5a. 9th Grade - 12th Grade	587	98%	22	25	12	16	82	34	38	
	5b. High School Graduate	10	2%	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	
	5c. Post-Secondary Education	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other Demographics	6. Not Employed at Enrollment	385	64%	12	16	10	9	72	12	21	
	7. Youth with a Disability	245	41%	14	13	8	1	43	10	25	
	8. Foster Youth or Aging Out of Foster Care	43	7%	0	2	0	2	4	1	1	
	9. Youth with Juvenile or Criminal Involvement	83	14%	1	4	0	6	10	0	2	
	10. Youth from Families Receiving Public Assistance	382	64%	7	10	8	13	54	11	12	
	11. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	45	8%	0	0	0	3	1	1	2	
	12. Basic Skills Deficient or Academically Delayed Youth	503	84%	12	17	6	15	82	34	8	
	13. Homeless or Runaway Youth	72	12%	12	0	1	2	2	1	4	
	14. Limited English Proficient Youth	132	22%	1	0	4	0	0	0	1	
	15. Economically Disadvantaged or Low Income Youth	461	77%	13	16	12	15	61	24	28	
	Program Activities	1. Received Education or Job Training Activities	571	96%	16	17	10	21	82	34	38
		2. Received Work Based Learning or Work Experience Activities	529	89%	16	15	12	12	82	34	38
		3. Received Community /Leadership Development Activities	514	86%	4	0	0	6	82	34	38
		4. Received Career Exploration Activities	531	89%	15	10	8	6	82	34	38
		5. Received Case Management /Mentoring Activities	566	95%	18	8	12	21	82	34	38
6. Received Support Services		487	82%	0	2	9	19	82	34	38	
Participant Performance Outcomes	1. Academic Credit Earned through Youthbuild	390	65%	0	4	4	9	33	34	38	
	2. Earned a Diploma, GED, or Continuing High School	552	93%	22	16	12	9	82	34	38	
	3. Occupational Credentials Earned, i.e. NCCER, HBI PACT, MC3, C.N.A., PCA, ASE, MNDOT Flagger	321	54%	0	0	0	3	56	0	0	
	4. OSHA 10, OSHA 30, S/P2, TCIA Safety, Mental Health First Aid, CPR, First Aid, Vulnerable Adult Mandated Reporter Certificates Earned	476	80%	11	24	12	17	61	18	19	
	5. Participants Who Exited Program	326	55%	14	14	12	26	47	7	20	
	6. Earned Diploma or GED	233	71%	8	6	0	2	17	15	15	
	7. Employment Placement	268	82%	7	4	1	16	16	23	7	
	8. College, Military or Advanced Occupational Training Placement	108	33%	0	0	0	6	6	3	4	
	9. Hourly Wage @ Employment Placement	254	\$18.31	\$18.21	\$16.00	\$17.75	\$22.71	\$17.33	\$16.50	\$18.68	
	10. Placed in Registered Apprenticeship, Construction, Finishing Trades PAT, or Career with Family-Sustaining Wages	44	13.5%	0	2	1	3	5	0	0	
	12. Hourly Wage @ Fulltime Construction/High Wage Skilled Placement	225	\$22.00	-	-	\$23.00	\$27.50	\$20.50	-	-	
	13. Unable to Obtain Education Outcomes (Moved, Etc.)	5	1%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	14. Unable to Obtain Placement Outcomes (Moved, Etc.)	8	2%	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	
	Customer Satisfaction Survey	1. Participants Rating Youthbuild Excellent	170	56%	3	0	5	3	28	5	2
2. Participants Rating Youthbuild Very Good		113	37%	2	0	3	9	16	3	1	
3. Participants Rating Youthbuild Average		23	8%	3	0	2	4	1	0	0	
4. Participants Rating Youthbuild Below Average		0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
5. Participants Rating Youthbuild Poor		0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
6. Total Number of Surveys Completed		306	100%	8	0	10	16	45	8	3	
Housing and Construction Outcomes	1. Residential Housing Units Constructed or Renovated	53		0	5	1	20	6	0	4	
	2. Garages and Other Structures Constructed	37		1	0	4	0	0	2	7	



mn EMPLOYMENT AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MINNESOTA YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM

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[mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/
youth-programs/youthbuild.jsp](https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/youth-programs/youthbuild.jsp)

[CareerForce.MN.gov](https://www.careerforce.mn.gov)