



## MWCA Best Practices

### SUBMISSION FORM

WIB Name Central Minnesota Workforce Investment Board

Submitted by *Trish Taylor*  
Trish Taylor/Board Chair Date

WSA Name Central Minnesota Jobs & Training Services

Submitted by *Barbara Chaffee*  
Barbara Chaffee/Chief Executive Officer Date

**Attach a description (no more than two pages) describing the innovative best practice.**

**Please consider addressing the following points:**

- Overview describing the innovative best practice
- Jobseeker impact (i.e.: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)
- Community impact (i.e.: benefits, outcomes for non-jobseekers)
- Identification of those involved, including collaborators
- Leveraging/alignment of outside resources
- Ideas for replication/lessons learned

Information can be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to:

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## **MWCA Best Practices: Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services Manufacturing Camps *Technology... Innovation...***

### **Overview**

It is blindingly clear that technology and innovation are the points of separation that hone the razor sharp edge of competitive advantage in global manufacturing today. Webster's dictionary defines technology as applied science, "the system by which a society provides its members with those things needed or desired". It is widely known that "The World is Flat" and that we live in an era of unprecedented light speed advancement in computerization, digitization and automation. Keen and urgent attention must be placed on the education, preparation and empowerment of our youth for tomorrow's prosperity lies in their hands. Our wants, needs and opportunities can only be realized through a comprehensive workforce development strategy that embraces the critical elements of science, technology, engineering and math. A strong command of this skill base must be seeded early in fertile, fortified and stimulated soil. Today's young people live in a world that is becoming evermore connected and competitive; the far corners of the world are no longer out of their reach. Manufacturing today is thirsting for investment in and an injection of interest, optimism, leadership, skill and talent. Manufacturing is in need of an image change to shift from "dark, dirty and dangerous" to "clean, comfortable and cool cash". Manufacturing is not dead, it's not all being offshored, there is job security and you can make great money. This message needs to be heard in the classroom as well as at the family dinner table. Business succession and knowledge transfer depend on the positive and successful engagement of youth and diversity.

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS) has been a collaborative leader in our service area forwarding our essential mission of job creation, career advancement and business development. CMJTS, as directed by its exemplary Workforce Investment Board, has proactively secured programming and resources to address technical workforce preparation in the statistically verified hotbed of manufacturing in Minnesota. This unwavering commitment of organizational time, money and staff talent has yielded significant returns. The intent of the camps is to ignite interest and passion in science, math and technology in the hearts and minds of young people. The camps have successfully provided project-based applied learning and career exploration venues. The camps have been both innovative and enticing, opening the envelope of imagination through exposure to end-user applications in medical, aviation, outer space exploration markets. This goal has been achieved through the utilization of robotics, machining, automation, mechanical design, welding, electronics and additional manufacturing tools and methods. Camps have been held at surrounding technical schools and have served a wide variety of student citizens from our communities. Participants represent varied age groups, backgrounds, abilities and interests. The camps have appealed to and integrated male and female students equally thereby furthering the advancement of non-traditional careers for women. Creative instruction and supportive interaction have been key components in the mix of service delivery to captivate, stimulate and perpetuate focus and excitement about subject matter and course content.

### **Impact**

Our communities have benefited by acquiring structured gainful activity to extend to their young people during the summer making possible an opportunity for productive use of time away from the rigors of the classroom. In addition, student knowledge has been expanded beyond the means and resources available to them in the classroom environment. Nearly 100 youth from Central Minnesota attended one of four manufacturing camps. The return on investment is realized in both short term and long term perspectives. Labor pipeline replenishment, business prosperity, wealth creation and distribution and community development as facilitated by gainfully employed citizens contributing to and growing local tax bases are significant project outcomes.

#### **Collaborators/outside resources**

Outside resources have been leveraged and included to enhance the camp experience. These contributions include manufacturing plant tours, supplemental funding and discounts on needed services such as transportation and food. The camp instructors have been industrial technology subject matter experts, technical college teachers and student mentors. Public partners include:

- Stearns-Benton Employment and Training
- St. Cloud Technical College
- Ridgewater College
- Wright Technical Center
- Minnesota Department of Rehabilitation
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Minnesota Department of Education

Private partners include:

- Remmele Engineering, Big Lake
- Ultra Machining Corporation, Monticello
- Genereux, Monticello

Participant and Parent Quotes:

- “Camp was cool, I loved building my robot!”
- “My son’s erector set gained a whole new meaning!”
- “Activities were planned, fun and taught to their level of understanding”
- “We learned new things while having fun”
- “My child loved the activities and is very interested in science”
- “Please put us on the mailing list for next year”

#### **Replication/lessons learned**

Replication is possible as sustained diversified funding is secured. Teachers and school facilities are available during the summer to continue this important work across the state and have need to be occupied and profitable. Private business is a willing partner in the effort to educate our youth.