



MWCA Best Practices

SUBMISSION FORM

WIB Name/WSA Central Minnesota Workforce Investment Board/WSA 5

Submitted by Barbara Chaffee, CEO, Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services

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

- 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

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Pathways to Employment Camps to Careers (C2C) 2009
Summer Youth Manufacturing and Healthcare Camps
Submitted by Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services - July 24, 2009

Overview describing the innovative best practice:

The mission of Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS) is: *To Strengthen Central Minnesota Communities through Leadership in Workforce Excellence*. The Youth Team of CMJTS has an additional mission: *Preparing Youth Today for America's Workforce of Tomorrow*. Camps to Careers (C2C) 2009 supported these missions by providing transition-aged students with disabilities meaningful opportunities for career exploration and by fostering cooperation between secondary education, post-secondary education, governmental agencies, workforce development, and private business.

Camps to Careers provided five regional career camps for transition-aged students with disabilities in the manufacturing and healthcare sectors. These camps occurred at three post-secondary institutions across central Minnesota and served students from Chisago, Isanti, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Sherburne, and Wright counties. Students took part in an 8-day, experiential learning experience in healthcare or manufacturing, had an opportunity to participate in paid internships following the camps, and developed viable transition plans from secondary school to post-secondary school options.

Job seeker impact:

Students with disabilities and their families can face unique obstacles as students transition from secondary education to post-secondary education or careers. It is essential that students have a clear vision of what their lives will be as they move beyond high school. In many cases, these families and students have limited access to the range of options available. Providing experiential/career learning opportunities to these students before they graduate from high school helps ensure their future success. Camp to Careers participants reported experiencing a broadening of their horizons and increased awareness of post-secondary options, particularly in post-secondary educational options and career pathways in healthcare and manufacturing. Paid internships and work experiences that followed the camps further connected students to the world of work. At the conclusion of their camp experience, most participants expressed the desire to transition to a post-secondary school program.

Community impact:

Manufacturing and healthcare are designated by the Central Minnesota Workforce Investment Board as demand industries in Workforce Service Area 5. Camps to Careers supports these industries and the corresponding communities by providing the emerging workforce with knowledge of, and appropriate pathways to, these industries through post-secondary education and other career pathways. Local businesses participated by providing internships or work experiences that helped students understand the future workforce needs in their communities. Community relations between adults and youth were strengthened as students had the opportunity to meet and develop working and mentoring relationships with business, education, and community leaders.

Identification of those involved, including collaborators:

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services acted as the fiscal agent for C2C, facilitated regional committees for five career camps, and created case files for all student participants. Ridgewater College hosted career camps in manufacturing at both the Hutchinson campus and the Willmar campus. Anoka Ramsey Community College - Cambridge hosted a career camp in healthcare. Anoka Technical College hosted camps in healthcare and manufacturing. Key steering committee members included Rita Borchert and Leslie Wojtowicz, CMJTS, Debra Bultnick, Joan Danielson, and Skip Wittrock, DEED, and Alyssa Klein, Pathways to Employment.

Regional teams organized local camps. Team members included representatives from public school districts, Central Minnesota Jobs & Training Services, DEED, parents, Ridgewater College, Anoka Ramsey Community College – Cambridge, Anoka Technical College, DEED Rehabilitation Services, Pathways to Employment, and local businesses.

Leveraging/alignment of outside resources:

Steering committee and regional teams leveraged staff time to plan these successful camps. Private businesses leveraged their employee time as supervisors for youth in internships and work experiences in addition to providing the actual work experience.

Ability for use or replication by others:

An eight-day curriculum for youth camps focused on opportunities for employment in manufacturing and healthcare sectors are developed and easily replicated from year to year. The established local and regional committees provide a template of membership and planning for future camps. Recruiting appropriate students, creating and executing career camps is a time-consuming task based on relationship building and understanding of the convergence of various entities' missions. This understanding is established and is an essential ingredient for long-term sustainability. CMJTS would be pleased to share best practices of Camps to Careers with interested entities.