



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 (ie: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)
- Community impact (ie: 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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DUE DATE: FRIDAY, JULY 24, 2009

Central Minnesota Manufacturing Association (CMMA)

Submitted by Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services - July 24, 2009

Overview describing the innovative best practice:

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services' FIRST grant provided the resources and support for the preliminary organizational work that needed to be done to establish a long-term, successful, efficient manufacturing association that meets the needs of its members and supports growth and retention of manufacturing in central Minnesota.

The Central Minnesota Manufacturing Association (CMMA) is a newly formed sector initiative that holds monthly association and steering committee meetings. Membership is open to all manufacturing businesses, manufacturing support businesses such as finance, transportation, and accounting, and education, and workforce development, economic and community development entities who believe in the value of the Association. Association meetings may include all or some of the following activities: networking, industry tours, strategic planning, identification and prioritization of cluster issues and solutions; and educational presentations.

The Central Minnesota Manufacturers Association provides a forum for sharing ideas and information and assists in a dialog regarding the economic and social value of manufacturing to the public, educational institutions, and government entities.

Job seeker impact:

The Central Minnesota region had five of the state's ten fastest growing counties from 1990 to 2005. Between 2006 and 2030, the population is expected to continue to grow by 300,000 people. The region is also expected to see an increase in the emerging and entry-level workforce with the number of people ages five to 24 years expanding by almost 25,000 between 2000 and 2020. (MN Economic TRENDS, December, 2007). In addition, the number of workers reaching retirement age, but staying in the workforce, is projected to increase by 138% between 2000 and 2020.

Central Minnesota industries are not immune from external threats: competition from other regions, the impact and competition from the "global economy", technological challenges, and the workforce skills gap. Corporations value workers who are not only well trained, but also trainable. Central Minnesota WIB Industry Roundtables and state findings (*Understanding the Worker Needs of Manufacturers*, Minnesota Skills Gap Findings, 2007 DEED) report the number one factor to future business success is having a high-performance workforce. In addition, a lack of focus and priority on classroom technical education in the K-12 system is identified as a major concern by business. Across this region, there are multiple initiatives which seek to address the shortage of skilled labor to support the area's manufacturing sector and its specialty clusters. However, many of these initiatives are largely driven by separate entities and lack a cohesive approach rendering them under-utilized and potentially duplicative. This information and collaboration gap impedes business development and job retention and creation. CMMA seeks to close this gap.

As an example, the CMMA Workforce Development Committee is focused on the preparation and delivery of skilled labor to meet current and anticipated needs and opportunities in area manufacturing. The committee collaborates with industry, primary, secondary and post-secondary education partners to achieve this goal. The committee serves to promote and advance manufacturing career awareness to citizens, schools, and communities within its service area.

Community impact:

CMMA's goals are to strengthen and enhance the manufacturing industry in central Minnesota; identify and implement customized, replicable, effective, and sustainable business solutions; perpetuate collaboration and business-driven prioritization of objectives and resources; eliminate replication and duplication of sector solutions by improving communication between private business, education, workforce development, economic and community development partners.

The CMMA Legislative Committee establishes and maintains relationships with area state legislators, identifies key issues of concern to Central Minnesota manufacturers, meets with government officials and coordinates the annual CMMA Manufacturers Day at the Capitol in St. Paul. The committee also prepares a legislative fact sheet and serves as an advocate for CMMA members at public hearings, legislative committee meetings, and special events.

Identification of those involved, including collaborators:

CMMA had approximately 50 members at its inception. Its current membership is 97. Board members are: Les Engel, Engel Metallurgical, Ltd., St. Cloud; Linda Besse, Komo Machine, Inc., Sauk Rapids; Lisa Koll, Doherty Staffing Solutions, St. Cloud; Doris Illies, Productive Alternatives, Little Falls; Nicole Snell, Pro Staff, St. Cloud; Harry Larson, Enterprise Minnesota, Minneapolis; Tim Zipoy, CMJTS, Monticello; Wayne Anderson, DEED, St. Cloud; Nick Weis, Crystal Cabinet Works, Princeton; Kurt Helgenson, St. Cloud State University; Henry Fischer, St. Cloud Area Economic Development Partnership.

Leveraging/alignment of outside resources:

Many of the current members of CMMA have been involved in the work of the local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) and in various regional collaborative efforts. A number of CMMA members (Les Engel, Linda Besse, and Bob Schuning) were involved with the Manufacturing Partnership of Central Minnesota, a project funded by the Governor's Workforce Development Council. This group focused on manufacturing workforce preparation and pipeline issues. A FIRST Grant was awarded to Partners for Strategic Growth for Stearns, Benton, Sherburne and Wright counties. Some individuals involved with Partners for Strategic Growth are also involved in CMMA, including, but not limited to, Linda Besse, Chair of Stearns-Benton Employment Training Council (SBETC) and Vice President of CMMA. This dual membership provides a seamless collaboration between the two entities. CMMA uses the data and demographic information gathered by the Partners for Strategic Growth to further define regional manufacturing workforce and economic development issues and to develop CMMA strategies.

Ability for use or replication by others:

CMMA is an industry association, soon to be totally sustained by its membership. It carries out its work through regular meetings of its Board of Directors and working committees including Program, Marketing, Membership, Workforce Development, Annual Conference Committee, and Legislative. CMMA hosts a website, which encourages new members, supports its current members through association activities, outlines organizational structure, and lists current members. Both CMMA and CMJTS are pleased to share this best practice with other individual or groups wishing to initiate successful sector strategies.