



## 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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***DUE DATE: FRIDAY, JULY 24, 2009***

# **Youth Leadership Program – Region 7E**

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

## **Overview describing the innovative best practice:**

The CMJTS leadership program is dedicated to developing opportunities for youth to grow as successful community members and strong leaders while providing a vision for the future.

The Youth Leadership program mission and vision is: *As youth of the CMJTS leadership program, we believe in striving for excellence by becoming dedicated leaders of tomorrow.*

Operational guidelines for the Youth Leadership program are:

- Leadership groups will meet weekly.
- Youth will learn leadership skills through hands-on instruction and problem-solving activities through various community projects.
- CMJTS staff and/or community leaders will provide in-person mentoring and be positive role models to youth.

The following is a sample of PY 08 Youth Leadership Program activities:

- Mentored disadvantaged youth in the Sandstone area in collaboration with Kettle Kinship, Family Pathways, East Central School District ISD #2580, and Community Education, East Central Regional Library
- Assisted with Youth Ice Fishing Day with Hinckley and Finlayson Elementary School and Finlayson Sportsman's Club
- Homeless prevention activities with City of Sandstone, East Central School District, and City of Askov
- Volunteered at Carlton Youth Shelter (landscaping and painting)
- Volunteered at long-term care facilities: Pine Medical Center, Green Acres, and GracePoint (gardening with local residents)
- Prepared candle bags for Relay for Life cure-for-cancer fund raiser
- Attended Youth Day Rally at the Capitol and spoke with state legislators about youth-related issues
- Collaborated with North Branch Community Education for Family Fun Night
- Assisted North Branch Community Education in planning and working at MS Bike-a-Thon
- Performed spring yard clean up for elderly residents in North Branch and Sandstone
- Volunteered at Caring and Sharing Hands
- Assisted with North Branch Villages autobiography of senior citizen residents
- Helped developing school pride at Rum River South
- Set-up lending libraries for low-income families throughout Isanti County

## **Job seeker impact:**

Youth learned about and practiced work-readiness skills needed for success in the job market through on-going group activities, mentoring relationships, community projects, and personal career exploration. These crucial skills include problem solving, commitment, leadership, teamwork, community collaboration, oral communication and presentation, commitment, responsibility, punctuality, social, written communication, and other various soft skills.

## **Community impact:**

Youth established relationships with leaders in their own community and experienced the rewards associated with “giving back” through community-wide projects. This sense of pride, accomplishment, and connectedness will help them avoid the temptations associated with risky behaviors. Communities also benefited directly by having more volunteers for local projects.

## **Identification of those involved, including collaborators:**

The CMJTS Youth Leadership Youth Program collaborated with numerous community organizations and school districts including Kettle Kinship (mentoring program), Family Pathways in Sandstone, East Central School District ISD # 2580, East Central Community Education, East Central Regional Library, Hinckley Elementary School, Finlayson Elementary School, and Finlayson's Sportsman's Club, City of Sandstone, City of Askov, Carlton Youth Shelter, Pine Medical Center, Green Acres, and GracePoint, Relay for Life organization, North Branch Community Education, North Branch Chamber of Commerce, City of North Branch, Caring and Sharing Hands, North Branch Villages, Rum River South, and Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services.

## **Leveraging/alignment of outside resources:**

Youth Leadership is supported by WIA and Minnesota Youth Program funds and supported by volunteers and programs associated with the above collaborators, which include local schools, community education, and volunteer organizations as listed above.

**Ability for use or replication by others:**

CMJTS developed a leadership program recruitment brochure and curriculum outline that CMJTS is happy to share with other groups wishing to implement a youth leadership group.

CMJTS Youth Leadership program best practices are:

- Get youth involved as high school sophomores. This allows more time for youth to establish relationships with CMJTS staff and with leaders in their communities. The longer they are able to participate in the program, the more invested in leadership they become. It also gives older youth the opportunity to become role models and mentors to younger youth in the leadership group and in the community.
- Meet with youth on a weekly basis.
- Provide hands-on leadership instruction and problem-solving activities through various community projects.
- Encourage in-person mentoring.
- Demonstrate positive role modeling.
- Reach out beyond local communities to provide greater vision and expand opportunities.