



MWCA Best Practices

SUBMISSION FORM

WIB Name/WSA _____ Southwest Minnesota – WSA 6

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The Marshall Workforce Center Partners (SW MN PIC & JS/Business Services), Minnesota West Community & Technical College and Southwest Minnesota Adult Basic Education submitted and received a MN Jobs Skill Partnership Grant to provide Welding and Soldering training to low income non-native English speakers along with work based English language skills.

The three agencies that are working together to provide this training all have a common goal, to be able to provide workforce skills and knowledge to our customers in order for them to become employable, therefore self sufficient.

The grant was written for the Welding and Soldering training because there was/is a shortage of welders and metal fabricators throughout Minnesota, but a pronounced shortage in Southwest Minnesota. Welding is listed by the DEED LMI as one of the “Major Occupations with a Large Number of Future Openings” in Southwest Minnesota. With the increasing numbers of immigrant workers throughout Southwest Minnesota, we are finding many of them are underemployed and therefore annual incomes are below the 200% poverty. We find that one population particularly is the Hmong population. Many of the Hmong population have high school diplomas and post secondary education in their countries, but are finding they need better English and Writing skills along with workplace skills to succeed in Minnesota/United States.

There has been a great interest of the Hmong population, along with other immigrant populations, in the Welding and Soldering training. The training combines English work-based reading and math through the Southwest Minnesota Adult Basic Education and hands-on welding and soldering proficiencies through Minnesota West Technical &

Community College. The training is 80 hours and participants receive a certificate of completion through MNWest Customized Training upon successful completion. Workforce Center staff provides the job seeking services including: resume preparation, job search assistance, and interviewing skills. In addition, the participants are provided tours of local plants and interview opportunities with identified companies seeking welders.

Benefits for this training are that participants gain specific skill training that will lead to direct employment. The employers benefit by having a pool of potential workers who are hard working, dependable and trained in demand specific skills. Their success is our reward.