



Annual Report

2023-2024

Executive Director Tammy Biery

Career Solutions is an employment and training organization, and our Joint Powers and our Joint Powers and Workforce Development Boards are vital leaders in our work to provide a welcoming, informed, and trustworthy space for youth and adult job seekers, community organizations, educational institutions, and businesses seeking employees. Career Solutions brings these entities together to shape a prosperous future for themselves and the community.



The past year has brought challenges for our workforce and employers. With the shifting business environment, expanded demand for skilled employees, and uncertainty of the political environment have all contributed to our 2023-24 story. Despite these challenges, our dedicated board members, staff, and partners have worked tirelessly to achieve significant milestones, including:

- Increased Placement Rates,
- Employer Engagement,
- Skill Development Initiatives,
- Community Outreach and Internships.

This report showcases the positive impact of our collaborative approach, but we remain committed to continuous improvement. With our board and partners, we have been committed to providing a high standard of client support and training required by DEED. I am pleased that Career Solutions continues delivering positive results in all these areas.

Career Solutions has successfully worked in partnership with other sectors to make sure that our stakeholders are served. This report provides an overview and examples of the successes of this past year. From the Xcel Power Up program for adults to CareerONE for youth, Career Solutions is focused on success. Our success is the community's success.

We extend our gratitude to our dedicated board members, staff, employers, training providers, community partners, and most importantly, the individuals who actively engaged in our programs. Your commitment is crucial to building a robust and inclusive workforce.

Tammy Biery

Meet the Board Chairs

Chair of the Joint Powers Board

Commissioner Steve Heinen has been on the Joint Powers Board since 2019 and has served as chair for 5 years. Commissioner Heinen has had a long career in public service and Career Solutions values his knowledge and expertise. "It's been an incredible experience being part of this board for 7 years and humbling experience being chair for the last few years."



Chair of the Workforce Development Board

Jill Magelssen has been on the Workforce Board for 25 years and has served seven years as the chair. Jill brings expertise as an employer to the board but her connections with business owners throughout Central MN adds even greater benefit as Jill has a pulse on what is happening in the business world. "Serving on the board at Career Solutions has been a great volunteer opportunity; and their mission supports the importance of helping people connect with good jobs."

Table of Contents Career Solutions

1	Executive Director Tammy Biery
2	State and Federal Numbers
3	Adult Programs
4	Career Solutions Programs
5	Youth Programs
7	Financial Reports
8	Staff
9	Board and Committees

Table of Contents Friends of Career Solutions

11	Executive Director's Notes
12	Friends of Career Solutions Programs
13	Financial Reports
14	Sponsors & Donors

State & Federal Programs Clients Served

Adult

Xcel Energy Power Up Grant - 28

Central Minnesota Community Empowerment Organization - 11

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) - 171

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Businesses - 24

“We sent one of our employees to the American Injection Molding Institute to obtain a certification in “Molding 2”. This certification has allowed us to improve our product quality and sets our company apart from other injection molding companies. I would highly recommend the Career Solutions IWT program to other local employers.”

-Candice K., AMAX Manufacturing, Inc, Foley, MN

Pathways to Prosperity - 35

State Dislocated Worker - 243

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Adult - 72

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Dislocated Worker - 84

Youth

In School Youth/Out of School Youth - 90

Minnesota Youth Program - 167

Outreach to Schools - 1,361

Pre - Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) - 21

Work Experiences - 19

Youth at Work - 49

Youthbuild - 52

Adult Program Highlights



Graduates of the Power Up Project.

Xcel Energy Power Up Project

Career Solutions coordinated services and training for 21 participants throughout Minnesota. The eight-week hands-on energy related construction training held November 2023 - May 2024, was provided by Building Strong Communities, an apprenticeship preparatory program located in Minneapolis. These are the first graduates to participate in the public and private partnership that prepared workers for in-demand career-path employment in fields related to energy and construction trades. This training offered individuals the opportunity to receive union endorsed training, exposure and a “foot in the door” to a career in the trades.



Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) Bridge Maintenance Program.

Twelve adults completed the Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) Bridge Maintenance Program. They successfully completed eight weeks of Advanced Safety and Maintenance Facility courses taking their Boiler’s Special License exam in September. The program was funded by DEED. Career Solutions partnered with SCTCC for training.

“The cohort was engaging, the Instructors were awesome, and participants celebrated the final night with a pizza party. As I left last night my favorite comment was - “Now what am I going to do every night from 5-9 pm. I loved coming to class!” It’s always amazing to see how a group of people from all different backgrounds can pull together to support each other and form friendships,” Kim Randall, Career Solutions Career Planner.



Participants in the P2P Bridge Program.

CareerForce Lab staffed by Career Solution

Visitors served: 10,193 Phone Calls: 1,798

Programs Directly from Career Solutions

Human Resources Networking Group

The HR Network has 180 members from Stearns and Benton County businesses.

“ I have a small (recruiting) team at my company and we are working to build out our talent acquisition strategy which will involve building partnerships with community agencies in the various markets that we operate in. I have always been impressed by the level of service provided through St. Cloud Career Solutions – but especially your partnership.” ~ Austin V., Coborns Inc.

“Being part of the Career Solutions HR Networking Group has provided valuable insights into new opportunities within the HR community, while also helping me stay informed about employee training programs and addressing common challenges faced in HR. The group has been an excellent resource for expanding my knowledge and professional connections.” ~Jeni W., HR, Reliable Premium Management

“The Career Solutions HR Networking Group is one of the best ways to get a pulse on our local human resources goings-on. In an industry that can sometimes focus on the national and state levels, it’s great to connect to others in the immediate area who are experiencing similar challenges and difficulties in the job market and can share experiences of what worked and didn’t work for them. Rising tides raise all ships, and this network has endeavored to help all of us work together to lift us communally.” ~ Sara V., HR Generalist, Tri-CAP

I-WE (Inclusive Workforce Employer) Designation

The following employers have met the standards and been awarded the I-WE designation.



NAHAN



Job Club

Job Club is a support group for job seekers. Led by Career Solutions Career Planners, attendees discuss their experiences, challenges, and successes with other job seekers in attendance. While other programs have parameters for those served, Job Club is open to anyone searching for employment. This program has grown year by year. In the 2023-24 fiscal year, 380 job seekers joined Job Club. Job Club is a partnership with Friends of Career Solutions.

“RJ stopped at Job Club today to let everyone know he has obtained employment at St Cloud State University. He said the support from the Job Club members kept him going whenever he was ready to give up.” ~ Tom Hickey, Career Solutions Career Planner

Youth Program Highlights

CareerONE

CareerONE is a work readiness program for youth ages 14-17. Beginning 24 years ago, a handful of youth learn the process of finding a job, while honing life skills and academic progress. The program has grown from 40 teens to 170. Beyond work readiness skills, youth earn college credits and skills, taking them to in-demand jobs in careers including healthcare, construction and manufacturing, public safety, and early childhood education. Sponsorships, donations, and grants support the program.



Construction Track youth are pictured with their projects – planters and a bookshelf. Planters were donated to nonprofits for fundraising auctions.

“I applied to CareerONE because I never had a job before. I had looked at other jobs including a grocery chain and a fast food chain, and I did feel as if I were ready to work in these positions. However, during a career fair at my school, I came across the CareerONE booth. I was very interested in working outdoors and in helping out the local community. Ultimately, this is why I applied to CareerONE.

During CareerONE I began learning the most during our track work, although being in the computer lab is not my favorite, I did learn about personal protective equipment and how to prevent falls. I was really excited to begin work in the carpentry lab, and on my first day I met my team in there. On the first day in the lab, we had to engage in team-building to ensure our group would be able to productively and safely work together. Also on the first day in the carpentry lab, I got to use a miter box and cut a board into pieces for our golf tee board game project. As CareerONE continues this summer I am very excited for more time in the carpentry lab and to build things”. ~ Khoe

Minnesota Youth Program

The youth team is currently helping to place youth that are age 14 to 24 to give them real-life career experience and/or assist them in gaining experience in the workforce. This support is targeted at moving youth out of poverty. One client, who recently graduated college, has moved from a work experience job into unsubsidized employment with AmeriCorps in her first real full-time job with benefits.

Outreach to Schools

The partnership between area schools and Career Solutions helps students prepare for their future.

Dear Angela Schmitz
Thank you for your time and interest in coming to Tech for your presentation on interviewing skills and professionalism! The information you shared with us was very helpful and useful, like how we should sell ourselves by giving our skills more meaning and sounding more appealing to employers, and how we should do research on the company we are applying to. Again, thank you for coming to Tech High School, and I hope to see you again at Tech in the future.

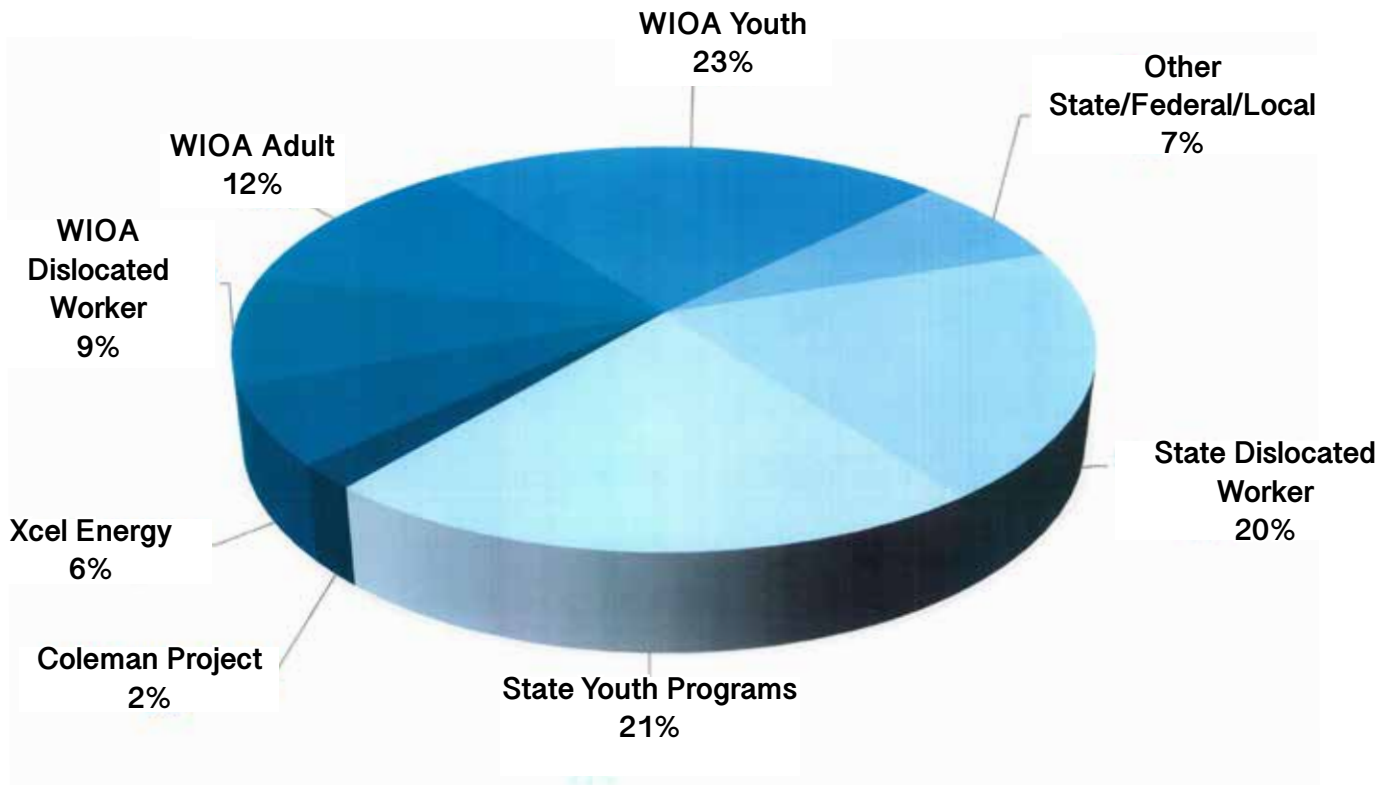
Minnesota Youth Program - Outreach to Schools.



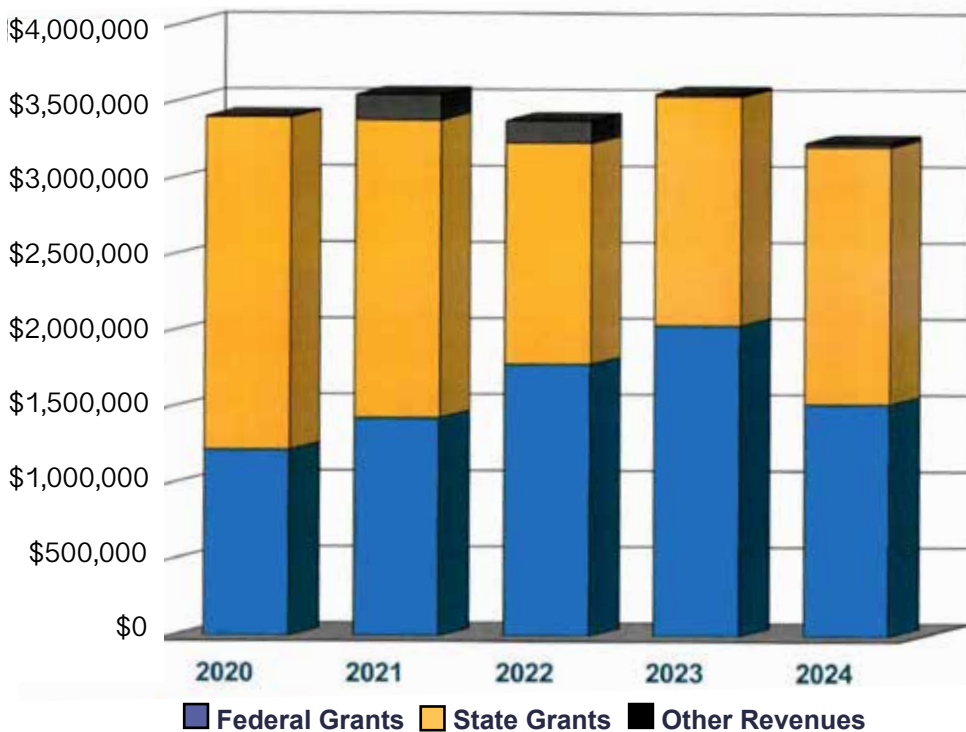
*Youth Team: L. to R.
Jacob Kaduk – Client Services Manager,
Angela Schmitz – Youth Team Lead,
Nimo Hassen, Trisha Welle, &
Nour Mohamed – Career Planners.*

Financial Report

General Funds Grant Distribution



Total Revenue



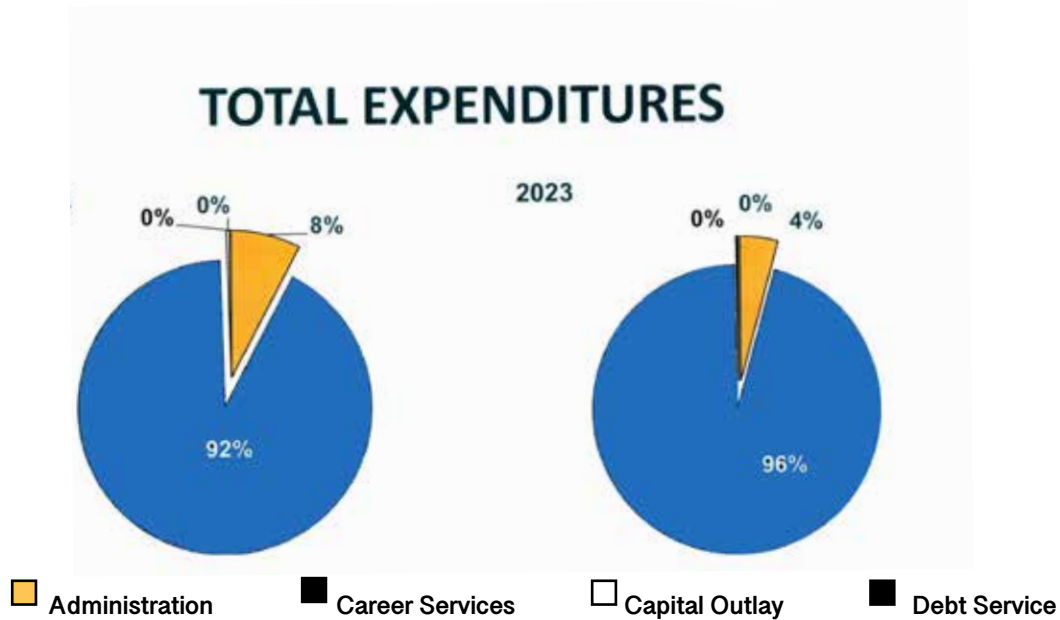
Federal Grants Totaled \$1,523,723 in 2024, \$2,039,364 in 2023, \$1,784,329 in 2022, \$1,429,939 in 2021, and \$1,219,539 in 2020.

Federal Grants decreased \$515,641 or 25% from 2023 due primarily to additional COVID grants and youth grants that were received in 2023.

State Grants totaled \$1,687,745 in 2024, \$1,500,901 in 2023, \$1,450,111 in 2022, \$1,953,160 in 2021 and \$2,180,783 in 2020.

State grants increased \$186,844 or 12.5% from 2023.

Total Expenditures



Staff

Tammy Biery - Executive Director Career Solutions, Friends of Career Solutions

Administrative Staff

Kari Court - Executive Assistant
Angie Dahle - Business Services Manager
Karen Hennen - Receptionist
Jacob Kaduk - Client Services Manager
Scott Loesch - Finance Manager
Judy Manetas - Receptionist
Ann Meline - Development & Program Manager
Jeni Pederson - Outreach & Eligibility
Karen Schlangen - Accounting Specialist
April Shaffer - Outreach & Eligibility

Career Planners

Lead Adult- Caroline Ruegemer
Lead Youth- Angela Schmitz
Nimo Hassen
Tom Hickey
Judy Kobylinski
Nour Mohamed
Jankai Mulbah
Kim Randall
Samira Shire
Trisha Welle

Career Solutions Board & Committees

JOINT POWERS BOARD

Steve Heinen - Benton County Commissioner - Chair
Jeff Bertram - Stearns County Commissioner - Vice Chair
Leigh Lenzmeier - Stearns County Commissioner
Joe Perske - Stearns County Commissioner Alternate
Beth Schlangen, Benton County Commissioner

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Jill Magelssen - Express Employment Professionals - Chair Brent
Bultema - St. Cloud Hospital - Vice Chair
Les Engel - Engel Metallurgical Ltd. Youth Council Chair
Dave Borgert - Strategic Assoc., LLC – Program Committee Chair
Jeff Bloss, Creative Planning - BerganKDV
Shirwa Adan - Credient Care LLC
Rachel Anyu-Lainjo - CentraCare
Melissa Ball-Warriner - CareerForce - Job Service
Gail Cruikshank - GSDC
Jennifer Erickson - St. Cloud Technical & Community College
Mohamed Farah - Real Estate Property & Transportation
Janet Goligowski - Stearns County Human Services
Mohamed Goni - CMCEO
Ken Huling - North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters
Bret Marshik - Benton County Human Services
Georgia McCann - ATS
Julie Lunning - St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce
Caroline Nerhus - Central MN Adult Basic Education
Bernie Perryman - Batteries Plus Bulbs
Brandon Schauer - Pipefitters Local 539
Tohow Siyad - National Home Healthcare Transportation
Carrie Stang - Rehabilitation Area Manager CareerForce
Mary Swingle - Boys & Girls Clubs of Central MN
Meghan Woods Lehrer - Falcon National Bank

YOUTH COUNCIL

Les Engel - Engel Metallurgical Ltd. – Chair
Caroline Nerhus - Central MN Adult Basic Education -
Vice Chair
Anna-Maija Lee - Parent Representative
Cindy Belmont - Vocational Rehabilitation
Greg Boelter - Stearns County Community Corrections
Gail Cruikshank - Partner for Student Success
Ken Huling - North Central States Regional Council of
Carpenters
Susan Jordahl - St. Cloud Technical & Community College
Melanie Legatt - Catholic Charities
Dylan Lindgren - Career Solutions Work Experience Student
Ann Matvik - Big Brothers Big Sisters
Karl Nohner - CentraCare
David Norling - West Central Area Learning Center
Brandon Schauer - Pipefitters Local 539
Mary Swingle - Boys & Girls Clubs of Central MN

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Dave Borgert - Strategic Associates, LLC - Chair
Tanya Adair - DeZurik - Vice Chair
Brent Bultema - CentraCare
Steve Nusbaum - St. Cloud Technical & Community College
Don Hickman - Central Minnesota Initiative Foundation
Ken Huling - North Central States Regional Council of
Carpenters
Ann Kennedy - WACOSA
Sarah Lampert - Park Industries
Karen Pundsack - Great River Regional Library
Brandon Schauer - Pipefitters Local 539
Ranone Thompson - Terebinth Refuge



Annual Report
2023-2024

Friends of Career Solutions

Friends of Career Solutions (FOCS) was created as a nonprofit in 2017 to increase the participation of young people in the CareerONE program. Career Solutions, as the implementing partner, successfully grew the program from 40 youth to 170 thanks to the support from FOCS and the community. The Immigrant Services also program flourished with help as businesses expanded their staff with talented new immigrants. Cultural divides were bridged, skilled employees were secured, and businesses thrived.

Innovative staff at Career Solutions introduced new programs to the partnership supported by FOCS, Career Solutions, and the community like Job Club, I-WE, open houses, and Discovery Days are flourishing. CentraCare has continued to assist CareerONE, in all aspects of the program, and we rely heavily on their input with the healthcare training initiative. PCI and MCI Carpet One have been long-time supporters and Thomas Ritsche's Central Minnesota Community Foundation grant supported the Construction and Manufacturing Track. The United Way of Central Minnesota has continued their support of the program. St. Cloud Technical and Community College has consistently found ways to further assist, educate, and support the needs of participants.

We are so grateful for these and the many other foundation, businesses and individuals who have chosen to support Friends of Career Solutions initiatives over the years. It's not only a good thing to do for the youth and the community but also means the community is banking on its future.

Tammy Biery

Friends of Career Solutions Board

Dave Borgert – Board Chair – Strategic Associates, LLC

Crystal Lahr – Treasurer – ATS, Inc.

Dominique Hollomon – Secretary – Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Minnesota

Jama Alimad

Tammy Biery – Executive Director – Friends of Career Solutions, Career Solutions

Meet the Chair of Friends of Career Solutions' Board of Directors

David Borgert has been the board chair since the organization's formation in 2017 although he has been engaged with Career Solutions since 2008. Borgert has held numerous leadership positions in various governing local organizations and is an expert that we can count on. "Being part of this organization and seeing its success is a rewarding experience. We are helping to assure a brighter future for our communities by not only assisting businesses to recruit and retain employees but also by increasing the skills and workforce readiness of the future workforce."



Friends of Career Solutions/Career Solutions Partner Programs

CareerONE



The CareerONE Program has been running for 24 years, serving youth aged 14 to 17. It is funded by Career Solutions and nonprofit partner, Friends of Career Solutions, with community support. Thanks to the support, CareerONE has grown from 40 youth to 170. Teens prepare for the workforce and receive experience in the rigors and rewards of work. They earn college credits, have hands on experiences in a choice of healthcare, construction and manufacturing, early childhood education, public safety or delve into possibilities for their future. Math and reading challenges are addressed. Financial skills are learned and community service projects are tackled. In the summer of 2024 teens did cleanup projects at Lake George, worked on the grounds of CentraCare and tied blankets for Gillette's Children's Hospital and Coborn's Cancer Center. Friendships were made and skills were mastered.

Immigrant Services

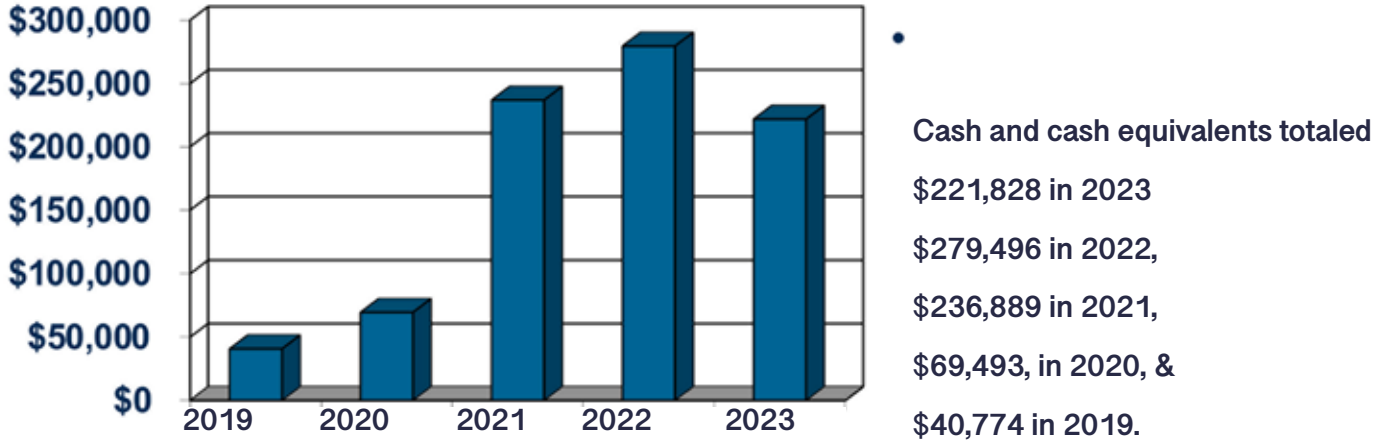
Immigrant Services was supported by the United Way of Central Minnesota. The program allowed bilingual Career Planners to travel to the Central Minnesota Community Empowerment Organization and Quarryview Education Center as well as at CareerForce to work with Immigrants navigating the employment processes. And to work with businesses who are updating policies and procedures as they hire immigrant employees. Seventy-four people participated in Immigrant Services at off-site locations. One hundred sixty-one individuals participated in Immigrant Services.

Discovery Days

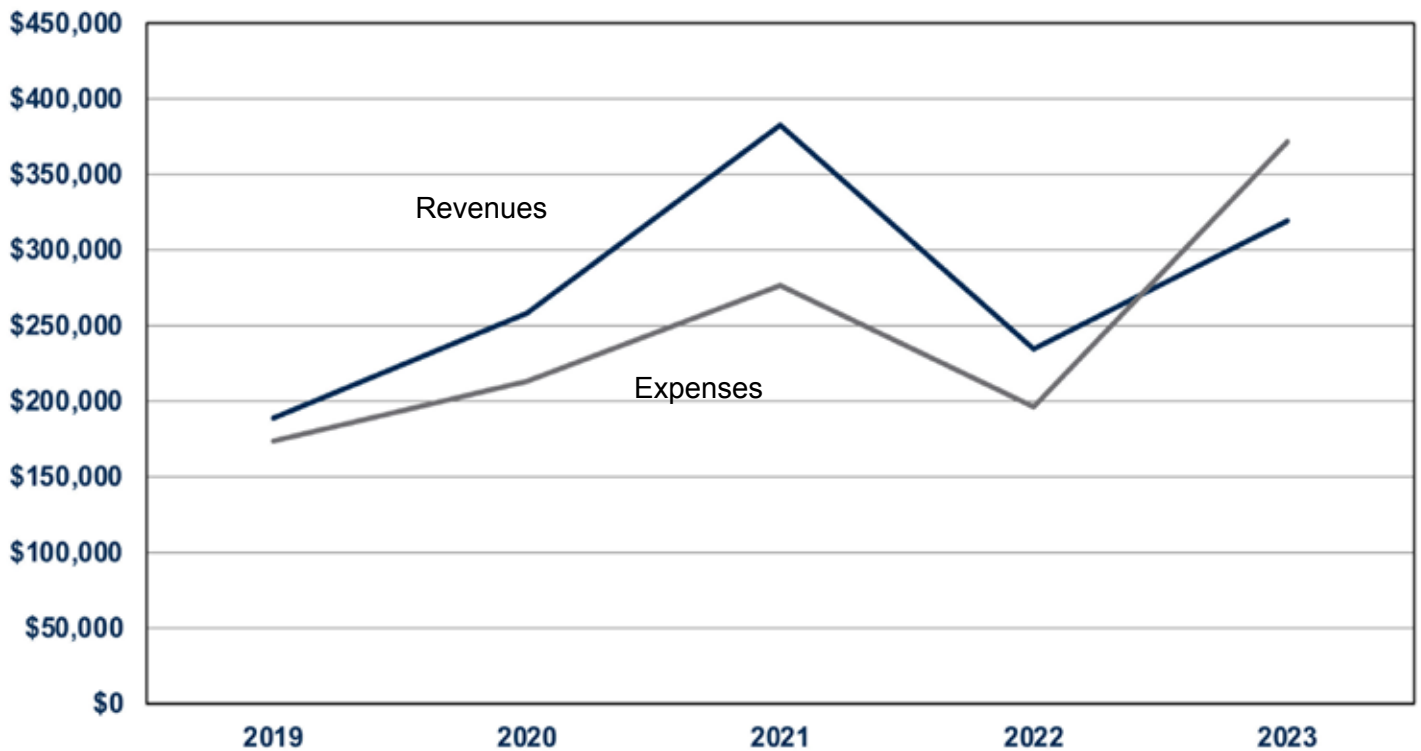
Businesses, educational institutions, and job seekers paired in specialty centered career discussions and hands-on experiences. Focused career paths include: commercial driving licensing, welding, healthcare/Certified Nursing Licensing and early childhood education. One hundred twenty-seven individuals participated in Discovery Days.

Financial Report

Cash and Cash Equivalents



Revenues and Expenses



CareerONE Sponsors



United Way
of Central Minnesota



Donors

DeZURIK, Inc.
Blattner Company
Thomas Ritsche Foundation, CMCF
Falcon National Bank
Beth Schlangen

InKind Donors

CentraCare Food Service
Apex Services
St. Cloud Technical & Community College
Backwards Bread Company

Immigrant Services Sponsor



Discovery Days Sponsors

ATS
Bernick's
Brenny Transportation, Inc.
CareerForce
Coborn's, Inc
Collins Brothers Towing
CWMF
DCI, Inc.
EBI
Geringhoff
Knife River

New Flyer
Northern Metal Products
Park Industries
Performance Foodservice
Polar Tank Trailer
Republic Services
Rotochopper, Inc.
Spee-Dee Delivery
St. Cloud Technical and Community College
Virnig



Career Solutions • Friends of Career Solutions
1542 Northway Drive
St. Cloud, MN 56303

info@csjobs.org • friends@csjobs.org