CAREER SOLUTIONS

Explore. Discover. Succeed.

ANNUAL REPORT

2025 - 2026

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: TAMMY STARK

A Message from Career Solutions Leadership



Career Solutions is dedicated to connecting youth and adult job seekers along with businesses to provide them with the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. Our Joint Powers and Workforce Development Boards provide vital leadership in creating a welcoming, informed, and trustworthy environment that supports a prosperous future for our community.

Throughout the past year, our board members, staff, and partners have worked diligently to achieve meaningful progress in employment placement, employer engagement, skills development and community outreach. These accomplishments reflect our shared commitment to strengthening the workforce and expanding opportunities for all.

This report highlights the positive impact of our collaborative efforts and our commitment to continuous improvement. In partnership with our boards and stakeholders, we strive to provide high-quality client support, training, and services that meets and exceeds the standards established by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

From the Dislocated Worker Program for adults to CareerONE for youth, Career Solutions works across sectors to help individuals develop skills, explore career pathways, and achieve their employment goals. By working together, we ensure our programs respond to the evolving needs of job seekers, employers, and the broader community.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our board members, staff, employers, training providers, community partners, educational institutions, and, most importantly, the individuals who participate in our programs. Your dedication and collaboration are essential to building a strong and skilled workforce. Our success is the community's success.

Tammy Stark

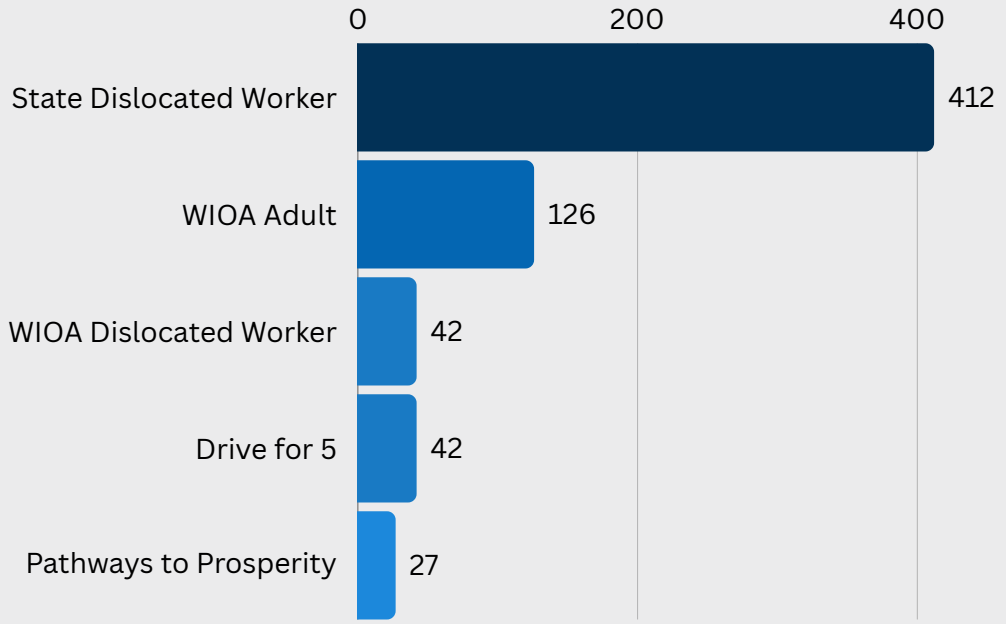
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Career Solutions

1 Executive Director Tammy Stark
3 Adult Programs
4 Youth Programs
5 Testimonials
6 Testimonials
7 CareerONE
8 Events
9 Business Services
10 WACOSA
11 Financial Report
12 General Funds Grants Dist.
13 Staff
14 Boards
15 Youth Council & Program Committee
16 Community Involvement

STATE & FEDERAL PROGRAMS ADULTS SERVED

Adult

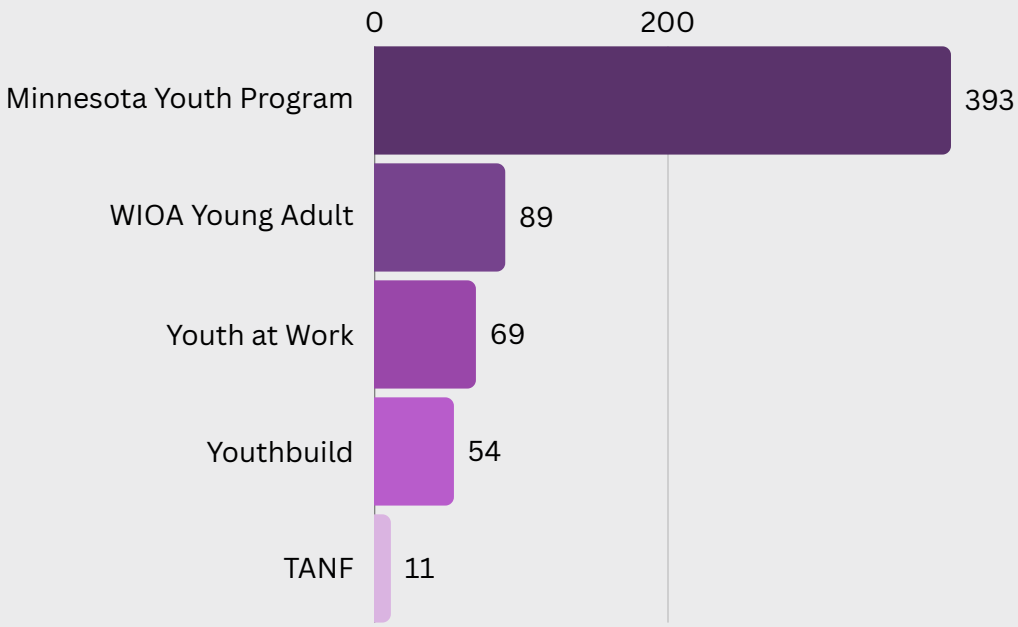


Total: 649

Incumbent Worker Trainees Served through above Adult Programs: 245

STATE & FEDERAL PROGRAMS YOUTH SERVED

Youth



Outreach to Schools Clients Served: 2,732

Total: 3,348

Work Experiences created through above progrms: 42

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

Job Seeker Testimonial

“I first got introduced to Career Solutions when I started college in January. A career planner named Amy was assigned to me, and she's been an absolute wonder to work with. At 35 years old I had an outdated resume and interview skills that needed serious work. She was extremely helpful in teaching me how to properly succeed in landing a career. I am currently going to start my job at a local manufacturer in a few weeks.

Amy told me about the Welding Job Fair Career Solutions was hosting shortly after I graduated from my welding program. I attended the job fair and talked with every employer. About three weeks after the job fair, a local employer called me and said they had a day shift available and were wondering if I was still interested in the position. I said, "absolutely" and we started the process of getting everything rolling for the interview. When the day came for my interview, I was extremely nervous, but I took deep breaths and remembered everything Amy taught me, and it helped calm my nerves.

Three hours after my interview, they called and offered me the position. I was overwhelmed with joy, nearly jumping out of my seat with the news. If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't change anything.

Amy and Career Solutions has helped me in such a positive way; I can't even put it into words. Without their help and guidance through my journey of school and job searching, I don't know where I'd be now. I really appreciate everything about them. It's a great organization!” - Raychel, Job Seeker Client



Raychel, Job Seeker Client

Career Lab staffed by Career Solutions:

Visitors Served: 8,745
Phone Calls: 1,636

Career Lab Testimonial

“The Career Solutions staff have helped me a lot with my job search and steps I don’t understand. They are patient and walk you through each step in finding a job. Job searching can be stressful and I am very grateful that Career Solutions is here to help everyone!” - Joe, Career Lab Customer

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) Testimonial

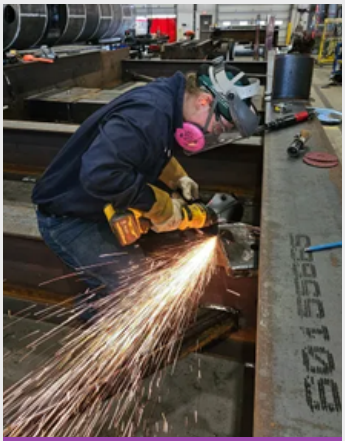
"The maintenance training program through P2P was probably one of the biggest aids in helping me to step into a new career field after being out of work for almost 10 years. I gained an abundance of skills and qualifications from this course. My career planner Kim has done a great deal to guide me through this process step by step with a ton of kindness and support. Job club has been excellent for teaching me helpful job seeking skills such as cover letters, interview strategies, and so much more. The job fair I have attended was beneficial as it gave me the opportunity to meet with potential employers. I received two interviews from the last job fair I attended! I also benefited from the support services of being able to get clothes for interviews and a haircut as well.

I have so much more confidence in my ability to obtain a job in a career field I'm excited to begin working in. From the beginning for me this hasn't just been about finding a job but about finding the right job that I can be successful in for years to come. I feel much more prepared to accomplish that goal after the services I have received. Thanks for the vote of confidence you have had in me from the beginning. I really appreciate all you have done for me!"- Kim, Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) Client



Kim, P2P Client

Drive for 5 Client Testimonial



Gaege, Drive for 5 Client

"Going through Career Solutions Foundations of Welding program at SCTCC was an opportunity I'm glad I didn't miss. I'm involved in building industrial size asphalt equipment such as asphalt silos, conveyor belt systems, and repair equipment. I was able to utilize the TIG and MIG welding training I received to acquire a career in welding at ASTEC/CWMF." - Gaege, Drive for 5 Participant

"Our interaction with Career Solutions has been a positive experience. They have done a good job letting us be involved with the development of the Drive for 5 welding curriculum. We have found that non-traditional students, such as Gaege, are more motivated to move into careers such as welding. We will always be looking for welders, as welding is the bloodline of our business." -Sarah, HR Manager, ASTEC/CWMF, Waite Park

CAREERONE

CareerONE Youth Program Participants & Testimonials

CareerONE Participants	***Summer 2025***	***Summer 2026***
St. Cloud (5-week program) Total Attendees who completed CareerONE	165	173
Number of St. Cloud Applications Received	532	546
Healthcare Track	45	39
Manufacturing Track	N/A	19
Construction Track	19	16
Public Safety Track	20	20
Early Childhood Education Track	19	21
Traditional Track	62	58
Rural Sites (2-week program) Total Attendees who completed CareerONE	37	27
Number of Rural Site Applications Received	56	42
Sauk Centre Site	15	10
Melrose Site	11	9
Paynesville Site	11	8



Amir

"I joined CareerONE to gain experience and prepare for my future career. This program taught me that adapting to new career paths and team development takes time, and that communication is key to overcoming challenges together. As a member of Team 6, I've loved exploring different careers while building great friendships with both people I know and people I don't know. CareerONE has made a huge impact on my goals and in life, and I am grateful for this opportunity. One thing that I have experienced at CareerONE that will help me get my dream job is organization and consistently doing my tasks every day since it shows my efficiency and work ethic. CareerONE is more than gaining job experience; it prepares you for life's hardest challenges and obstacles." - Amir

"Throughout my time in CareerONE, I have been able to work on my communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and time management skills. I have improved my work ethic and consistency. I'm grateful that I was able to experience CareerONE and that I was part of this community. I met all sorts of people, and I am grateful that I got to work and learn about all of my coworkers. Building the planter box taught me to have patience and that organization and adaptability are crucial on a team. This job showed me how small details, consistency, and effort build trust, both with supervisors and with a team." -Gricelis



Gricelis

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Job Seeker Event Attendance

Job Seeker Open House & Hiring Events:
Fall - *Workforce Development Month*: 50
Winter - *Kickstart your Career*: 115
Spring - *Your Lucky Day*: 174 (Record attendance!)
Summer - *Summer Kickoff*: 55
Total: 394 attendees

Career Trek: 3-day, 9-Hour Intensive
Career Exploration Workshops: **162**

Weekly Thursday Job Club: 743

Career Discovery Day Events:
CDL: 88
Welding: 64
Facilities Maintenance: 43
Total: 195

Computer Literacy Workshops: 8

Stearns Bank Financial Literacy Presentations: 47

Total Job Seeker Attendees: 1,549


Winter Open House


CDL Discovery Day


Jon, Job Club Client

"Thank you, Career Solutions, team for all your assistance and support in my recent employment search. With your expertise and pleasant demeanor, you made a normally uncertain future of looking for viable employment, an achievable goal. You guided me through many areas with which I needed significant improvement. Including networking, resume building, cover letters, references, and interview techniques. Through the various weekly lessons and topics, you provided me with the skills and confidence I required to make my search successful. I can't begin to thank you enough." -Jon

WACOSA PROJECT

WACOSA Project

WACOSA Career Trek Workshops, Discovery Days & Lunch & Learn session

Career Solutions partnered with WACOSA, an organization in Central MN that serves adults with cognitive and/or physical disabilities, to connect their clients with local employment opportunities. At any given time, approximately 15 WACOSA clients are actively seeking work. Many individuals are interested in roles such as grocery, assisted living, nursing home support, food service, laundry, housekeeping, production and assembly, food service, and non-licensed daycare positions.

To support WACOSA's effort to connect their clients with employment opportunities, Career Solutions helped organize:

- **5 Career Trek** career exploration workshops serving 27 WACOSA clients.
- **4 Discovery Day** tours with local employers including Coborn's, Blue Line, Quanex and Country Manor. 10-12 participants attended each session.
- Recruitment of employers for a **Lunch & Learn** Talent Talks session "Inclusion that Works" in June to help HR leaders solve hiring challenges, expand their talent pipeline and improve their workforce performance and retention. 50 employers attended.



Career Trek


Discovery Day at Quanex



Discovery Day at Coborn's


Lunch & Learn

BUSINESS SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

Career Solutions connects local businesses in Stearns and Benton counties with qualified workers, and links businesses to state, federal and local resources. We partner with other local service providers to create innovative workforce development solutions and help employers onboard and upskill quality workers.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Program for businesses to upskill existing employees:
Served 24 Local Businesses and Upskilled 245 Workers

"We sent one of our employees to the American Injection Molding Institute to obtain a certification in 'Molding 2' through Career Solutions IWT program. This certification has allowed us to improve our product quality and sets our company apart from other injection molding companies. I highly recommend the Career Solutions IWT program to other local employers." -Candice K., Owner, AMAX Manufacturing, Inc, Foley

HR Monthly Networking Group:
Served 100+ Local HR Professionals

"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, Waite Park



Spring Reverse Job Fair



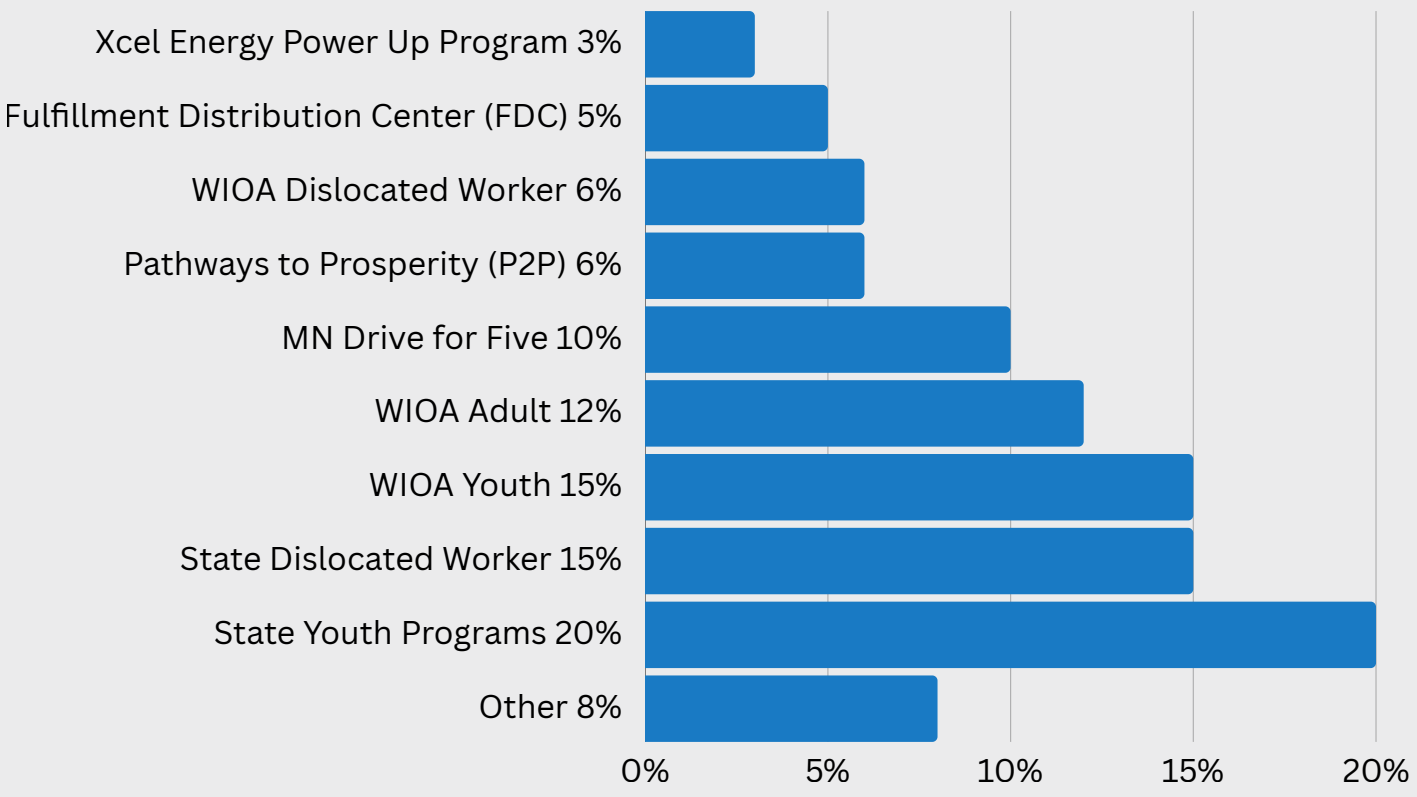
Employer Summit for 50 Employers



Lunch & Learn for 50 Employers

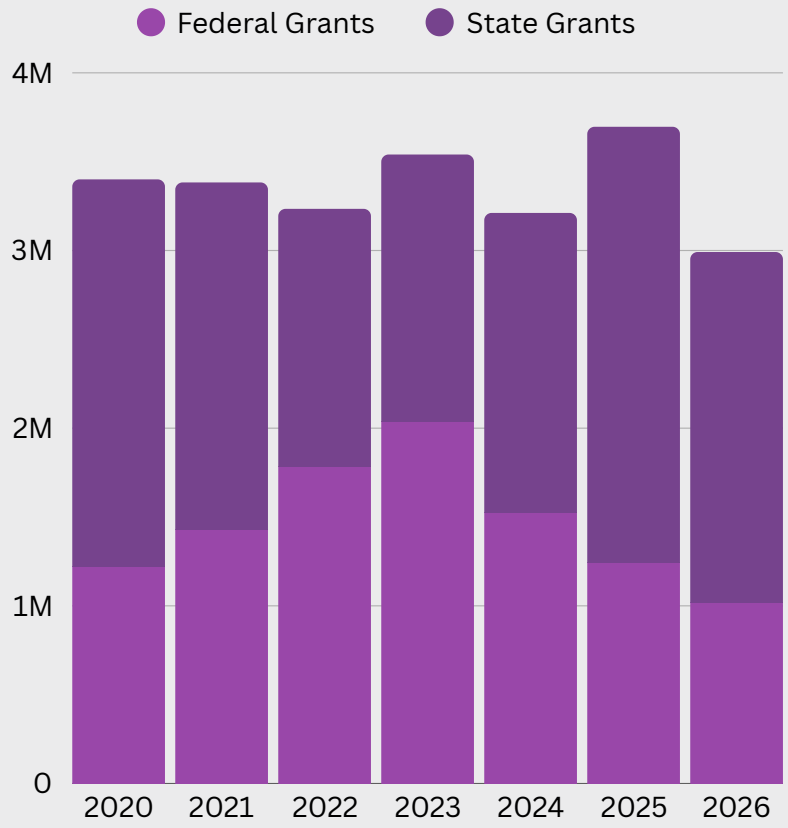
FINANCIAL REPORT

General Funds Grant Distribution



FINANCIAL REPORT CONTINUED...

General Funds Grant Distribution



Federal Grants Totaled:
2020: $1,219,539
2021: $1,429,939
2022: $1,784,329
2023: $2,039,364
2024: $1,523,723
2025: $1,245,858
2026: $1,017,762

State Grants Totaled:
2020: $2,180,783
2021: $1,953,160
2022: $1,450,111
2023: $1,500,901
2024: $1,687,745
2025: $2,450,511
2026: $1,973,734

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STAFF

Executive Director

Tammy Stark - Executive Director of Career Solutions & Friends of Career Solutions

Administrative Staff

Jacob Kaduk - Program Director
Angie Dahle - Business Services Manager
Kari Court - Operations Manager
Scott Loesch - Finance Manager
Karen Schlangen - Accounting Specialist
Jeni Pederson - Outreach & Eligibility Specialist
April Shaffer - Outreach & Eligibility Specialist
Judy Manetas - Receptionist
Karen Hennen - Receptionist
Ellie Jerabek - Career Lab Specialist/Receptionist
Phil Ruegemer - CareerONE Program Specialist

Career Planners

Caroline Ruegemer - Lead Adult
Angela Schmitz - Lead Youth
Kim Randall
Hassan Omar
Trisha Welle
Nour Mohamed
Samira Shire
Amy Ehlert
Sara Biru
Monsi Montanez
Hannah Halter
Jean Guettler





CAREER SOLUTIONS BOARDS

Joint Powers Board

Jeff Bertram - Stearns County Commissioner - Chair
Steve Heinen - Benton County Commissioner - Vice-Chair
Bob Johnson - Stearns County Commissioner
Pam Beniot - Benton County Commissioner

Local Workforce Development Board

Jill Magelssen - Brookline Consulting - Chair
David Borgert - Strategic Associates, LLC - Vice-Chair
Jeff Bloss - Creative Planning
Les Engel - Engel Metallurgical Ltd.
Melissa Ball-Warriner - Job Service, CareerForce - St. Cloud
Gail Cruikshank - Greater St. Cloud (GSC)
Ken Matthews - St. Cloud Technical & Community College (SCTCC)
Adam Genereux - CentraCare
Michelle Schmitz - Xcel Energy
Janet Goligowski - Stearns County Human Services

Local Workforce Development Board (Continued)

Mohamed Goni - Central Minnesota Community Empowerment Organization
Ken Huling - North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters
Julie Lunning - St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce
Georgia McCann - ATS - Anderson Trucking Service, Inc.
Bernie Perryman - Batteries Plus Bulbs
Brandon Schauer - Pipefitters Local 539
Janel Sczblewski - Benton County Human Services
Carrie Stang - Vocational Rehabilitation Services - CareerForce - St. Cloud
Mary Swingle - Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Minnesota
Elizabeth Valencia-Borgert - St. Cloud State University (SCSU)
Meghan Woods Lehrer - Bernick's
Brittany Haycraft - Falcon National Bank
Danelle Montury - Central MN ABE
Ryan Strong - NFI Group (New Flyer)

YOUTH COUNCIL & PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Youth Council

Les Engel - Engel Metallurgical Ltd.- Chair
Danelle Montury -ISD #742 - Vice-Chair
David Norling - West Central Area Learning Center
Carl Anderson - Stearns County Community Corrections
Sarah Ware -ISD #742
Cindy Belmont - Vocational Rehabilitation Services St. Cloud
Mary Swingle - Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Minnesota
Susan Jordahl - St. Cloud Technical & Community College
Ken Huling - North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters
Melanie Legatt - Catholic Charities
Ann Matvik - Big Brothers Big Sisters
Emily Davis - St. Cloud Technical & Community College
Christa Martin - CentraCare
Kevin Warzecha - Kids Fighting Hunger
Dylan Lindgren - Youth Representative
Brandon Schauer - Pipefitters Local 539

Program Committee

Ken Matthews - St. Cloud Technical & Community College - Chair
Tanya Adair - DeZurik - Vice Chair
Ken Huling - North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters
Ann Kennedy - WACOSA
Brandon Schauer - Pipefitters Local 539
Danelle Montury - Central MN ABE
Lynn Seagraves - Park Industries
Amy Trombley - Initiative Foundation
Neil Vig - Great River Regional Library



Board & Staff: GSDC Innovation Award for CareerONE

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & OUTREACH



Benton County Fair



Essilor Tour



Food Drive


CareerONE Fundraiser



EPIC Public Safety Cluster



United Way Volunteering

FRIENDS OF CAREER SOLUTIONS

THANK YOU

Thank you for your Support!
Thank you to our generous Sponsors, Donors and Partners!



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