



MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION  
OF WORKFORCE BOARDS

## **Business Services/Economic Development Meeting**

**Date:** September 10, 2020

**Time:** 9:30-11:30am

**Location:** Online meeting

**Attendees:** Jessica Miller, Dan Wenner, Dan Solomon, Betsy Hill, Mary Rothchild, Morgan Hill, Marci Jasper, Leslie Wojtowicz, Mark Jacobs, Jackie Buck, Eriann Faris, Jennifer Byers, Marie Larson

### *Study Results – Jennifer Byers, Minnesota Chamber Foundation*

- The study partnered with IHS Markit for forecasting.
- Heading into COVID, Minnesota was seeing inequitable economic outcomes but a developed economy. The workforce is highly skilled and the economy is productive. Minnesota attracts several Fortune 500 businesses. The diversified economy is an advantage.
- Minnesota's relatively small population is a barrier to increased economic growth. Additionally, the state's economy is based in slower-growing industries. The state lagging behind in the I.T. and technology sectors.
- Consumer confidence is low, and this is a key factor in slowed economic recovery.
- The survey runs several scenarios on potential recovery patterns. Most of the projections show 2022-2023 for full recoveries.
- The Minnesota Chamber will also be updating one of their studies about immigrant entrepreneurship.
- They have been hearing that employers are struggling to fill unskilled entry-level \$20/hour manufacturing jobs.

### *What are local areas hearing from employers about hiring?*

- Many other local areas are also hearing that hiring is a challenge right now, especially for entry-level jobs.
- Despite this, there are some businesses that are struggling financially and are trying to avoid layoffs.
- There are many opinions regarding why businesses are having a difficult time finding workers, including: uncertainty about school's fall semesters during COVID-19, consumer confidence, loss of older workers in labor force due to early retirements offered by businesses earlier in 2020, supply chain disruptions.
- Some employers are finding creative ways to encourage older people to work longer or differently.

### *Customized Training and Continuing Education – Mary Rothchild, M State*

- M State has a new regional arrangement meant for internal use. This model is intended to help streamline communication.
- The regions and training categories can be found on the [Minnesota State Workforce Solutions home page](#).
- Workforce Boards may find it useful to connect with the regional lead about certain topics. In practice, most employers will still reach out to their local college.

### *CareerForce DEI Resources – Jackie Buck*

- [CareerForce Guide to Inclusive Hiring](#)
- Provides overview for employers, tools and resources, and tips on recruitment and hiring
- Also includes an assessment tool
- The link to this guide can be posted on agency websites!
- The guide will be updated consistently – this is not a static document

### *Tour of Manufacturing – Jackie Buck*

- October 1 – 7, 2020
- Visit [mnmfg.org](http://mnmfg.org) for more information. The website includes places to register a tour, education and business toolkits, virtual and in-person options

## **What's Going On? – Items of Impact and Interest Regarding Employers and Employer Services**

*M State* – 6% down in enrollments this fall. Enrollments vary by campus.

*Department of Labor and Industry* – Roslyn Robertson is DLI's temporary commissioner. An RFP will go out this fall for the youth skills training initiative. Several events are coming up for Pipeline and Apprenticeship.

*DEED, Marci Jasper* – VRS has previously had a long waiting list that is categorized into four sections. Several hundred people have been recently moved off this list and are beginning to receive services. Bite size learning modules are almost ready, and United Health Group project is still moving forward. Marci will return to the October meeting to talk about resources for employers.

*DEED, Liz Jennings* – What's New with CareerForce Resources were put out this morning (September 10, 2020). Weekly virtual career fairs have been continuing and they are exploring new ways to engage employers.

*DEED, Jackie Buck* – 15,000 people have requested access to Coursera. 10,000 have created accounts. Minnesota is the #2 state in the country for course enrollments. DEED applied for Reimagining America's Workforce grant and are awaiting a response. DEED's new Director of Business Development, Catalina Valencia, recently started.

*DEED, Jessica Miller* – Business consultations have been increasing. Working with U of M Extension to create additional resources.

*EDAM* – Winter conference is coming up on [January 21 and 22](#) in Bloomington. There is a call for presentations and proposals can be submitted online. [There is a webinar on September 22](#) with Ron Wirth from the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

*MAPCED* – Upcoming Quarterly Meeting will feature presentations about the [Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition Speed Test](#), a session about Rewriting the Rural Narrative by Ben Winchester from the U of M Extension, and a presentation about the Minnesota economy by Cameron Macht from DEED.

### Local Initiatives:

- *Rural Minnesota CEP* – Pushing incumbent worker training. Liz Jennings has helped with virtual job fairs.
- *Duluth* – All school districts are quite different in terms of delivery model this fall. [Drive thru Job Fair on September 16<sup>th</sup>](#).
- *Central Minnesota JTS*: Job fairs have not been well attended. Dislocated worker calls have been low, but they saw a slight increase last week. Have been applying to use CARES Act funds on various projects.

- *Metro*: The metro area has procured a license for Easy Virtual Job Fair to host events.

**Next meeting: October 8, 2020**